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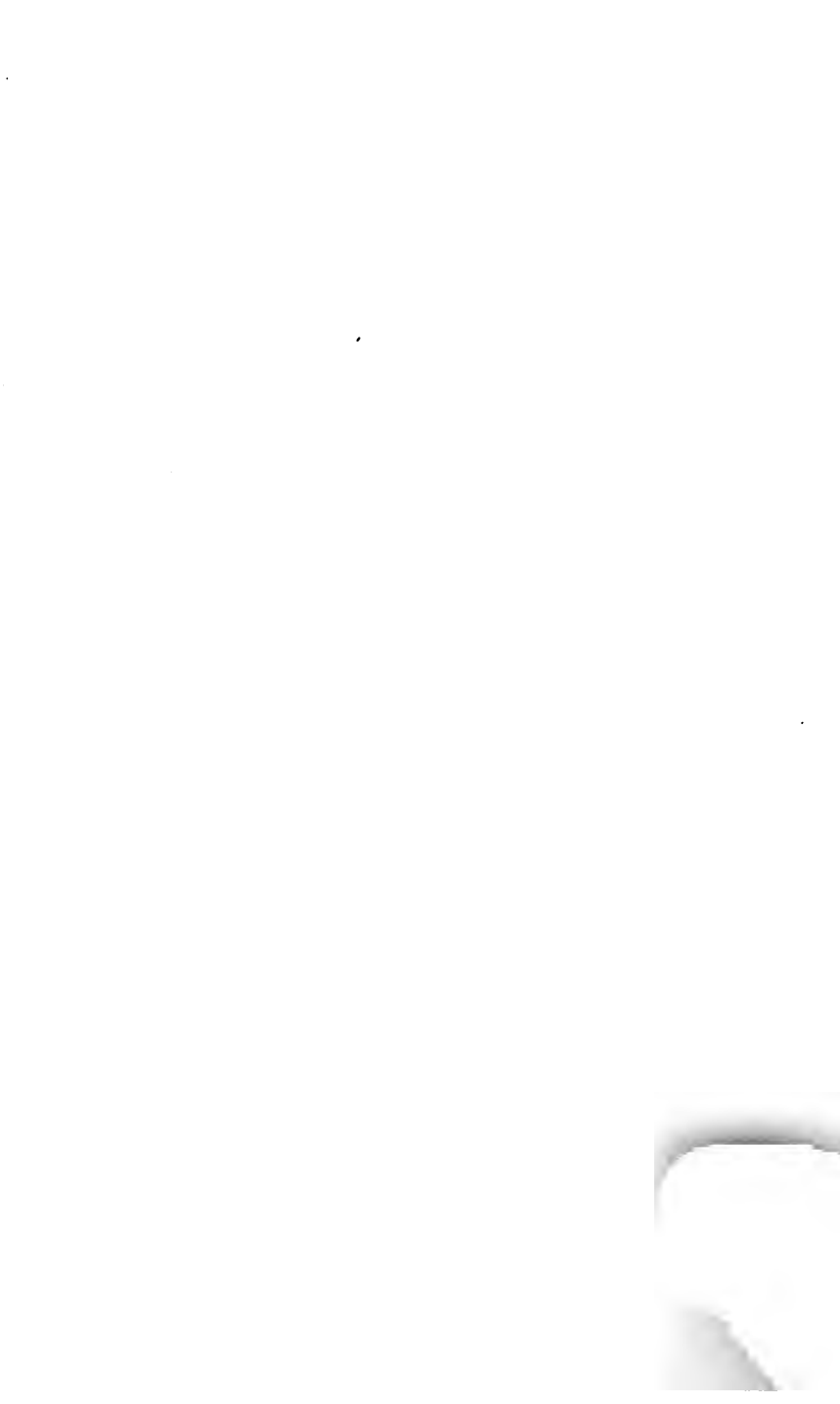


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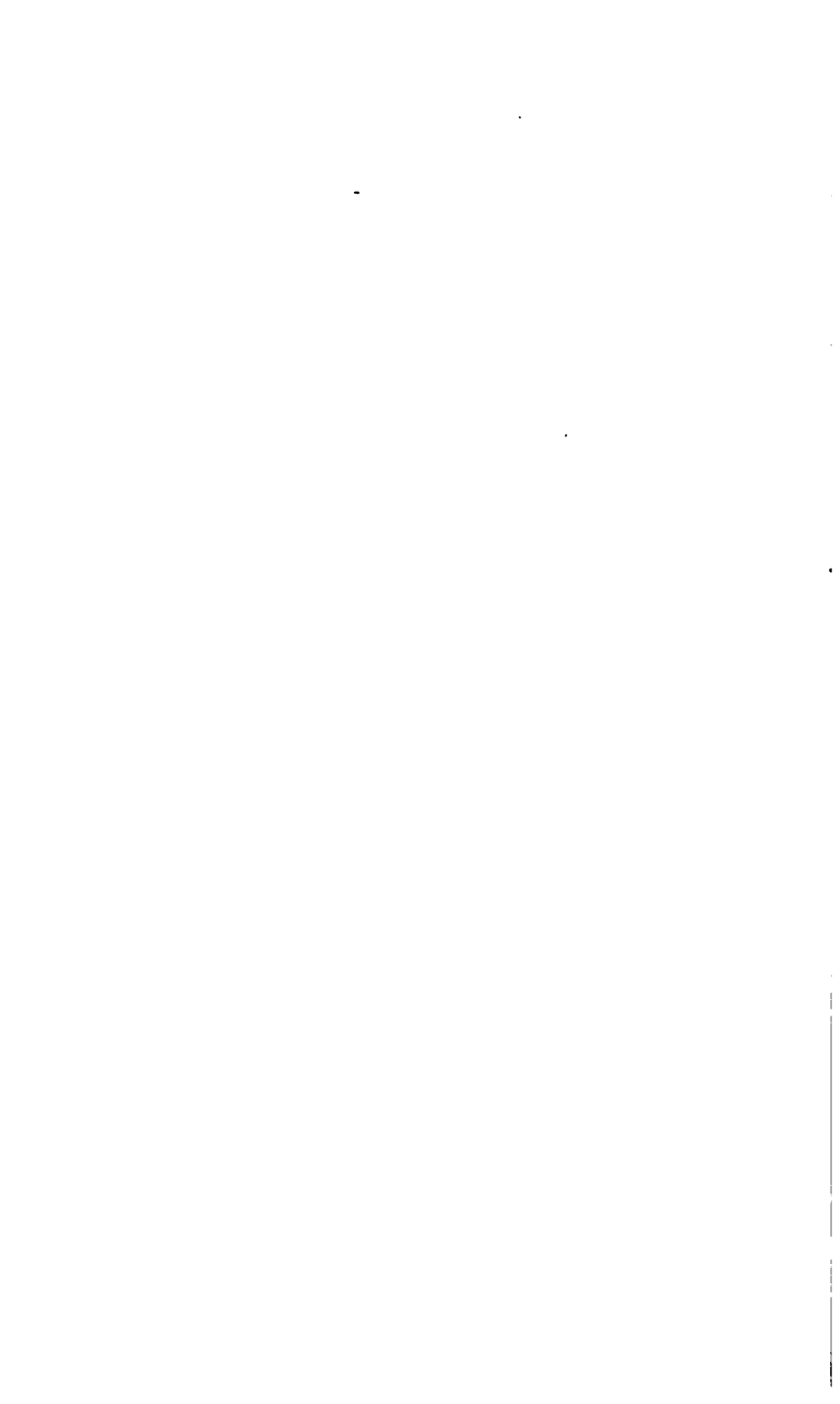


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MARY RAYMOND,

AND

OTHER TALES.

BY

THE AUTHORESS OF

“MOTHERS AND DAUGHTERS.”

&c &c.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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PIERRE L'ECREVISSIER.

VOL. II.

B



PIERRE L'ECREVISSIER.

“ Instances are not wanting of constancy, fidelity, gratitude, compassion, integrity, which escape the notice of the public, and are only observed of God, and good angels ; being seldom transacted in high life, or under splendid roofs and palaces.”

Bishop Fortin.

It is a pleasant thing to stand among the vineyards on a glowing September day, enjoying that intensity of green, that crisp, glossy freshness of foliage, which the already fading verdure of the woods, and the searching sunshine of an unclouded sky, render so refreshing. The bright mottled clusters of grapes, reddening hourly under their leaves, combine with the rich entanglement of gadding tendrils to destroy, at that late period, the formal air peculiar to vineyards at less luxuriant seasons of the year. The corn-fields have rendered up their treasures ; of the green crops nothing remains but unsightly stubble, or rude fallows ; while the vineyards are still bright, still beautiful with vegetation, still rich with promise for mankind.

On such a day, Etiolles is a cheerful spot. The sinuosities of a site commanding the silver windings of the Seine, and tufted with vineyards and plantations, impart an air of picturesque rurality to the village, scattered here and there along the vine-skirted causeways. The cottages look out upon orchards, over the outermost trees of which the intrusive vines, having set at nought the low stone boundaries, spread in defiance their wild luxuriance; and scarcely one of these rustic mansions but boasts its well-trained Chasselas, whose golden fruit ripens like bunches of ducats on the dilapidated frontage. Deep in the little dell whose shelving sides are thus freshly and harmoniously clothed, stands the church, scarcely visible amid surrounding shrubberies; and, hard by, the *curé's* humble habitation, more cheerful, perhaps, but not less tranquil, than the adjoining grass-covered homes, whose sanctuaries of rest have been consecrated by his pious offices.

Plodding along those green lanes, in spring-time so fragrant with violets, in summer so gay with the azure blossoms of the wild endive and the spiral bloom of the wild reseda, may be observed at early morning and early evening, when the first dew or the last is glistening on the gray thistle leaves, a strange figure of a man, half-soldier, half-pauper, whom it would be impossible to pass unnoticed, even if a gay snatch

of some stirring lay of Béranger's, or the burthen of some revolutionary chorus, did not strike the attention for some minutes previous to his approach.

Victoire au peuple ! Il a pris la Bastille—

Un beau soleil a fêté ce grand jour !

serves as a symphony of warning ; and, in a moment, measuring his still sturdy footsteps by the rhythm of his song, his fish-basket strapped upon his shoulders, his burly staff in hand, comes Peter the cray-fisherman—*Pierre l'Ecrevissier* of Etiolles !

There are great names in that part of the country ;—peers, ministers, ambassadors, have their summer-dwellings amid the hills ; Le Normant d'Etiolles, the dishonoured husband of Madame de Pompadour, has bequeathed the gorgeous mansion of a *fermier-général* to its precincts ; and, from the summit of the *côte* the eye plunges into the princely woods which adorn the opposite banks, surrounding the Château de Petit Bourg, once a palace of the Bourbons, and now the property of that most munificent of *parvenus* Aguado ! But among them all, from the proudest *Chevalier de l'ordre*, down to that industrious diffuser of useful knowledge, Galignani, not a name so rife in the mouths of the Etiollians as that of Pierre l'Ecrevissier ! Pierre is the walk-

ing lexicon, the living calendar of the village—the St. Simon—the Bourrienne—was a courtier of the time of Versailles, a hero of the days of Napoleon—has been a wanderer from one end of Europe to another, a practical geographer, deriving even his lessons of history from personal observation. Skilled in herbs too, he medicates successfully for man and beast; and although his profession, proper and peculiar, is that of purveying crayfish to the inhabitants of Etioilles, Soisy, Ris, and Champrosay, Pierre finds leisure to gather simples for the druggists of Corbeil and the herborists of Paris, juniperberries for burning in the hospitals, and weeds without end to form that endless variety of *tisanes*, which constitute the harmless quackery of the French hypochondriac.

No one knows so well as Pierre in what nook of the meadows the snowy mushroom may be looked for after shower; no one knows so well as Pierre in what thickets of the forest of Sénart the wild quince hides its diminutive but highly-flavoured fruit. The first wood-strawberries that grace the market-place of Corbeil, are despatched thither by Pierre; and whenever some spoiled child of the neighbouring Château is in want of a ring-dove or a squirrel to kill with kindness, it is to *him* that the commission is confided. But Pierre is a lover of the free commoners of nature. Very seldom is he to be moved to the

capture of these predestined martyrs—*never* unless the aspirant be known to him as a humane and well-conditioned child.

From such and similar pursuits and propensities, it may, perhaps, be inferred, that like *Wordsworth's* Peter,

A savage wildness o'er him hangs,
As of a dweller out of doors !

By no means !—Not a loungeur of the Tuileries is more courtly than Pierre l'Ecrevissier ! Manage that he shall encounter a fair lady, some fine day, in one of the briar-grown paths of the forest, and you shall see a bow, a smile, a courtesy of deference such as might have done honour to Louis XIV !—For, in the forest, Pierre is at home, and feels it incumbent on himself to do the honours of its shades ; and there is a grace, a conciliation, about his movements, so characteristic of the *vieille cour*, that you are tempted to exclaim, “ For once behold a Marquis who is not a *petit maître* ! ”—But it is no Marquis ;—it is only Pierre l'Ecrevissier !

Yet, Heaven knows, it is to no extrinsic advantages the cray-fisherman is indebted for his air of distinction !—Threadbare crimson pantaloons of an old hussar uniform, a fustian jacket patched at the elbows, a shabby watering-cap shading those dishevelled white hairs which were

once so closely plaited into the *cadenettes* of a soldier of the guard, a pair of *sabots* surmounted by goat's skin gaiters of his own manufacture, and, under all, a coarse, striped shirt, open at the neck, and displaying a muscular sun-coppered chest, and the throat in remarkable contrast with the well-furred grizzly beard that forms a frame work to his fine, open, weather-stained, but comely face—touched here and there with the furrows of time, but free from a single plait, a single line, a single contraction arising from the cares of worldliness. Such is the costume, such the characteristic countenance of Pierre!

Accost him, and something in the gladness of his voice cheers you like the tones of a mellow hunting-horn; nevertheless, if once admitted to his confidence, if once invited to occupy his wicker chair of state beside the hearth of his hovel, you shall discover inflexions of sadness in that joyous voice which go direct to the heart; the gasp of struggling emotion, the cry of uncontrollable passion! But his confidence is not easily to be won. You may buy his crayfish from June to March; you may waste your substance on bushels of juniperberries, and sheaves of dried hyssop or hore-hound; nay, you may shower down chopines of wine upon him, enough to turn the twelve mills of Corbeil—but all this is nothing to Pierre. It may make him toss up his

bonnet de police in honour of *la patrie*, or yield you in return a few tough histories touching the fields of Lutzen or Bautzen, the capitulation of Ulm, the retreat of Görlitz. But these are in the mouths of every old soldier, of *le petit Caporal*. You may pick them up in the first wine-house, or under any shady lime-tree in the neighbourhood of l'Hôtel des Invalides.

There is more of intensity, of originality, of tenderness, of truth, in the reminiscences of l'Ecrevissier:—and when you have wandered for a day by his side in the green recesses of Sénart or Rougeot—when he sees that, like himself and King Solomon, you can call the herbs and stars by their names—that you love the dumb creatures of the earth, and can make yourself loved by them in return—he will perhaps invite you, by a courteous wave of the hand, to sit beside him on the moss—and call your dog between his legs, and (dog permitting) roll its long velvet ears caressingly between his fingers—while he wanders back, as if unwittingly, into the past. Or if it be winter, and you have borne him company during the morning in his web-footed vocation along the stony shore, and among the creeklets of the Seine, with your gun on your shoulder, on pretext of looking for wild-fowl among the reeds, he will perhaps, invite you, on your way home, to step into his cottage, and forestal the perils of wet

feet by a glass of *cassis*—the home-made *goutte* of black-currant juice manufactured by his “old woman.”

In either case despise not the offer ! The *cassis* is a distilment well worth tasting ; and Pierre a monologian well worth listening to. Lounge beside him on the velvet moss, when the wild honeysuckles are in blossom and the linnets in tune—or follow him to that curious hovel where hang the baskets, and nets, and implements of his own manufacture—and where, sole but sufficient decoration of the polytechnical chamber, stands under a glass-shade upon the polished walnut-wood press, the bunch of artificial orange-blossom—the *bouquet de nocés* worn by his “old woman” on her wedding-day—just five-and-forty years ago,—hung round with strings of bird’s eggs, his gifts to his pretty Madelaine during their courtship, pilfered by himself in those same oaken shades of that same forest of Sénart, ere Pierre became so mild-hearted a naturalist,—ere he had suffered persecution and learned mercy ! What a study for the misanthropic—that loving couple—the superannuated Romeo and Juliet of Etiolles !—Pierre decrepit in body, Madelaine in mind—approaching second childhood—childless,—poor—but cheerful, laborious, grateful—rich in charity, and hope, and faith—throughout all changes of government, of ministers, of dynasties, full of

trust in the unchanging Lord of all—the mercies of a protecting Providence !

All this, perhaps, is not in English nature—this union of sensibility and *in*-sensibility—of knowledge and ignorance—of energy and self-resignation. It *is* natural with the French. Their vivacity, which is of a purely animal nature, subsides with time—their spirit of enterprise owes everything to physical impulse; and, unlike the strong, progressive passion of our own countrymen, sobers down when the head grows gray, when the arm hangs nerveless, and the sparkling of the eye is tamed by time and trouble.

It is only by touching a responsive chord in the breast of l'Ecrevissier, that you can wake him up into something of his former self. He has toiled for his country—bled for his country—raved, maddened, for the destinies of France. But all is over now. He knows the course of the gallant vessel among the breakers to be still perilous, still vibrating betwixt rock and whirlpool. But *his* cares for her safety are over. He has resigned the steerage into younger hands.

Pierre, then, as his back bowed by the long pressure of his crayfish-hod and the withered skin clothing his bony hands, sufficiently attest, was born under the *ancien régime*;—the day of the *Parc aux Cerfs*, the *gabelle*, and the *corvée*

—the day when the street-bred Dubarri sent the court-bred Choiseul an exile to Chanteloup, after the court-bred Choiseul had incarcerated some hundreds of unoffending plebeians in the dungeons of the Bastille ! Yet the Peter of those early days entertained no feelings of indignation against the oppressors of the people, the oppressed, of the King ; for though the cities of France were already boiling with discontent, marvellous was the subordination and submission of the rural population.

Peter was an hereditary adherent of the house of St. Aignan. His father and grandfather had farmed for half a century the lands attached to the fine Château de Luzières, the property of Count St. Aignan head of a junior branch of that illustrious family, whom Gabriel Hardouin, the grandsire of the crayfish catcher, never named without raising his cap, or the father without the utmost deference of vassalship.

Pierre, therefore, when at ten years old, he ran errands for the *maître d'hôtel* of the *Château*, felt himself sufficiently honoured by the occasion of rendering service to one, without whose aid and counsel, according to old Gabriel's account, the King on his throne would have found it difficult to control the destinies of France ; and whenever it chanced that, in the course of his vagabond expeditions fern-cutting or berry-gathering

into the woods, he encountered the young Count Alphonse on his Arabian, or the ladies of the family in their calèche, Peter would cuff aside his honest donkey into the brambles, and stand waiting their passing with a beating heart, as though the King of France, or the Sovereign Pontiff himself, were in presence! The very saucepan cover, launched at his head by the despotic *chef de cuisine*, or the oaths showered upon him by some consequential *marmiton*, when it was his fate to bring up from the farm less than the usual quantity of eggs, or a cann of cream less opaque than ordinary, conferred a sort of dignity on the young villain. There was a tone of courtliness, an odour of Versailles, in the very execrations of the very cook of the great Comte de St. Aignan.

Meanwhile, sworn at, all summer, and swearing at all winter, when the august family returned to their magnificent hotel in the Faubourg St. Germain, Pierre the donkey-cuffer of ten years old, grew into a fine young man of seventeen; and his expeditions into the woods of Luzières now began to produce, in addition to the usual trusses of fern for lighting the ovens of the farm, a delicate bunch of early violets, or a dainty basket of wild *hauboes* for a certain pretty Madeleine daughter of a *vigneron*, whose cottage stood on the outskirts of the village of Etiolles. Even

his grand-father Gabriel, blind as he was, knew the history of Peter's attachment; for his little grand-daughter Suzette whispered to him in his chimney-corner, how Peter, after a hard day's work, would trudge as far as Ris to accompany home Madelaine from the vineyards, when she was assisting her father in his work; and how at all the fêtes of the neighbourhood, in the avenue at Soisy, or beneath the fine elms of St. Germain, Pierre and Madelaine were constant company-keepers and partners. Many a sly laugh arose at the farm at his expense, but neither father, mother, grand-father, nor sister, were averse to his tender passion; for Madelaine, though the daughter of a poor vine-dresser, was laborious and modest; and it was settled, that when young Peter should be old enough to maintain a wife, Madelaine should become the helpmate of the future farmer of Luzières.

The fates were jealous of so much prosperity, and of such uninterrupted family union. The annual drawing of the conscription came;—what is called a bad number fell to the lot of Pierre; and a fine vigorous recruit of six feet high was not so easily replaced as to be within compass of redemption by the common purse of the family. There was but one thing to be done:—Suzette's dowry must not be encroached on; old Gabriel's winter comforts must not be diminished:—so

“ *En avant !—Marche !* ” and Pierre became a soldier !—

The protection of the St. Aignan family was so far advantageous to the *conscrip*t, that a letter of recommendation to the Minister of War secured the admission of the young soldier into one of the finest cavalry regiments of the service, quartered at Versailles ; and within a few months of quitting the solitude of Etiolles, Pierre, moulded by the cares of the adjutant into a smart and well-drilled hussar formed, one of the animal appendages of the royal parade. His good looks and assiduity soon rendered him a favourite with the officers of the regiment, while his natural love of distinction was sharpened in that hot bed of ambition, Versailles ;—so that, instead of troubling himself about the purchase of his discharge, the glowing soul of Pierre already aspired to the glory of a corporal’s twice-barred sleeve. After beholding, from his post at the gate of royalty, the beautiful queen, then in the full exuberance of pride and loveliness, escorted by her chamberlains, ushers, and pages, on her way to Chapel, Pierre swore within himself that *he* too would achieve greatness, and that it should go hard but he would revisit Etiolles as a non-commissioned officer.

Promotion, however, is not quite so attainable during the piping times of peace as during the

trumpeting time of war: and after passing three years of his allotted period of service in galloping, day after day, through clouds of dust after his Majesty's coach, or her Majesty's coach, or the coaches of his and her Majesty's august progeny, the Dauphin and Princess Royal—after standing to be grilled by the sun, or frozen by the nipping blast, hour after hour, at the gate of the royal courtyard, apparently for the important business of saluting the entrance of Princes, secular and ecclesiastical—Cardinals, Chancellors, Field-Marsals, and Ministers of State—Pierre applied for a furlough for the purpose of revisiting his village;—partly moved by the *maladie du pays*, and partly by the earnest desire latterly expressed in the letters of his sister, that he would once more eat the bread of his father's home, under a roof sheltering three generations of the family.

During his absence, his mother had been laid in the grave; and soon after her decease, the letters of his lively little Suzette acquired a tone of melancholy so foreign to her nature, that Pierre felt it his duty to go and aid her with his counsels, or console her with his tenderness. Of any anxiety he might experience to be once again by the side of his own Madelaine—his dear Madelaine—his betrothed Madelaine—he said nothing to himself, even in the strictest confidence.

But his task of brotherly consolation proved a harder one than he was prepared for. It was no easy matter, in the first place, for Pierre to extort from his sister the secret cause of all the tears she must have been shedding, to have made her blooming cheeks so pale, her bright eyes so hollow. It was not love that caused her grief, for Suzette's love was prosperous. She was betrothed to the son of a wealthy relative, who was serving his apprenticeship in one of the factories of St. Etienne, at the end of which period they were to marry, and be established. It was not hate, for her heart was soft with feminine virtues. It was no vain repining, for she was fondly cherished by her surviving parent, and beloved by her village companions. What cause, then, moral or physical, had lodged the worm in the bud? Alas! the mischief was only too easily explained: the young girl's reserve was solely occasioned by apprehensions that an explanation might tend to involve in danger her father or her brother.

The young Count St. Aignan was pursuing her with the importunities of an illicit passion; the young Count, who, having recently paid the tribute to society exacted by his rank in life, of marrying sorely against his inclination the ugly heiress provided as a fitting wife for him in his very cradle, considered himself doubly entitled

to profit by his privileges of *caste*, by insulting and molesting every woman tolerably attractive, within the boundaries of his father's estates. But lately married, he seemed to seek the charms he had a right to look for in his bride, in every other female form within reach of his insolent libertinism.

For a moment the young soldier's heart waxed hot within him, as he listened to his sister's complaints; and fiercely twisting his mustachios, he talked of vengeance. But the next, Suzette's gentle voice contrived to meet his ear, reminding him of the religious regard in which the house of St. Aignan was held by their parents, and of the misfortunes which the resentment of the Count might bring down on the gray heads they were bound to cherish.

"You are right," said Pierre, striving to subdue the ferocious instigations of his rage. "It is scarcely yet a case for vengeance; let me first see how far remonstrance may avail."

Having accordingly followed the young Count the next time he went on a shooting expedition into the forest, Pierre watched for a favourable moment, when the impetuous Alphonse had outstripped the *gardes de chasse* in attendance; and stepping forth from the underwood, suddenly stood before him.

"*Not' ancien !*"—said he, with a military salute,

and the abruptness of soldier's diction, "there is some mistake in all that has been going on at Luzières during my absence. You have been cheated by ill-advisers into regarding the daughter of your father's ancient servitor and the sister of his Majesty's soldier, as you would some *grisette* of the Boulevards of Paris. But think better of us, and think better of yourself, M. le Comte, than to be thus easily misled; or *nom d'une bombe!* the next time we meet in the greenwood there will be no parting till the grass smokes with the blood of one or both of us!"

Great as was Alphonse de St. Aignan's astonishment at this unparalleled effrontery, amazement was not the feeling that predominated in his countenance while he parried the fierce glances lavished on him by the young soldier. Irony and bitter scorn were in the courtier's smile,—the scorn of a low mind—the irony of an irritated temper. With an obeisance of mock humility, he owned himself fitly admonished; professed penitence; and even affected to offer thanks to Peter the Hussar, for having edified him with so valuable a lesson of morality. There was a significance in his mode of uttering a parting promise to Pierre that never would he again attempt to exchange a syllable with Suzette, which filled the young man with consternation; and before re-joining his regiment, he succeeded in persuad-

ing his own family, and the family of his sister's lover, to accelerate her marriage with Vincent, in order to secure the bride from all further molestation from so rampant a Tarquin as Alphonse, Comte de St. Aignan.

Once again among his comrades, Peter strove to forget what had passed, and to remember only the happy moments he had enjoyed at Etiolles in the presence of his bright and beautiful Madelaine. Suzette, now Madame Vincent, was safe at Lyons; Bertin, the father of his betrothed, was no retainer of the St. Aignans, to be intimidated by the insolence of Count Alphonse; and Pierre was satisfied that nothing *now* could go wrong, "*au pays*."

At head-quarters, meanwhile, some *guignon* seemed to pursue him. Whatever he did was done amiss: whatever he left undone, was heavily visited. There was a new colonel—a colonel of two-and-twenty, who had been a captain in his leading strings, and a field-officer when at fourteen he was the co-mate of Alphonse de St. Aignan at the *Collège des cadets nobles*; and to this young man the gallant *conscrit* of Etiolles appeared to be peculiarly obnoxious. Pierre was often laughingly accused by his comrades of being a *muscadin*; over-choice in the powdering of his Cadogan and the pomatuming of his side curls, either when a grand review by the Count d'Artois

was in preparation at Versailles, or when some *fête* at Ville-d'Avray induced him to scale the walls of the barrack-yard, after hours, to make one in the *Boulangère*. On one of these occasions, Count Miroménil, his colonel, having chanced to encounter him by the way, accosted him with the unholiday terms of "*gredin*," and "*freluquet*," and requited his macaroni-ism by a week's arrest. On his release, Pierre was heard to murmur, and the dose was repeated; again he was rash enough to complain that the measure of his punishment exceeded that of his offence,—and this mutiny of tongue was rewarded by ten days confinement, *au cachot*.

But a critical hour in her day of retribution had already struck for France. The States' General had assembled; the situation of the King and Queen was every moment becoming more critical. The impetuous loyalty of the royal Flanders regiment, in garrison at Versailles, had unfortunately been forced into such rash demonstrations, by the indiscreet concessions of the lovely but misjudging Marie Antoinette, as to cause perpetual altercations between the men and those of the hussar corps of which Peter formed a part. Scarcely a day passed but the revilings and tauntings of the Royal Flanders, imputing disaffection to their less turbulent comrades, produced some disastrous result. An imputation

was by this means created against the loyalty of the hussars, and the dissatisfaction of the royal family tacitly but visibly expressed against them : an estrangement of the favour of their Majesties, which naturally begat the very feelings it was intended to chastise. Count Miroménil, unable to conjecture why his men should be heard at the *estaminets* of Versailles bawling the *Carmagnole*, while the Royal Flanders chanted in defiance—

Y eût-il cent Bou'bons chez nous,
Y a du pain, du laurier p'r tous !

and grievously mortified by his want of influence over the corps, imputed all to his *bête noire*—to Peter of Etiolles, surnamed *Le Gaillard* :—and though Peter was at heart as loyal as the brave Du-nois, and as chivalrous in the cause of royalty as Bayard himself—a trifle—a nothing—was laid hold of in proof of his Jacobinical tendencies. He was *degraded* ;—the lace torn from his uniform, and himself drummed forth from the regiment. The Royal Flanders triumphed ; and it happened (the coincidence could be scarcely accidental) that at the very moment the degraded soldier, bareheaded, tattered, over-heated, still pursued at a distance by the outcries of the rabble, was making his way along the by-road leading from Versailles to Bougival, he was passed by Count Alphonse de St. Aignan, (who

occupied a confidential post about the person of the Queen,) mounted on his favourite Arabian, and wearing on his brow that same expression of profound and bitter scorn which had long dwelt in the memory of the brother of Suzette.

And what was now to become of the outcast? To return to his village under such a cloud of shame was impossible: father, grandsire, nay, even Madelaine herself, could scarcely have faith enough in *his* good faith, to believe he had been wantonly sacrificed. Blame *must* be imputed to him. No! he would stay at Paris—would seek employment in some calling open to all, where colonels of two-and-twenty had no authority, nor vindictive aristocrats the privilege of mischief. Despite his hereditary principles of passive obedience—despite the demoralising influence of the meretricious pageantry of the Court,—Peter was thus forced into democratic associations. Expelled from the ranks where he would fain have shed the last drop of his self-engendered blood in the service of the king, the trampled worm could not but turn on its oppressors.

He began to frequent the popular meetings at the Faubourg St. Antoine, the place where his scanty bread was toiled for and eaten in solitary bitterness; to herd with the discontented—to murmur with the disaffected—to threaten with

the desperate. The *bonnet rouge* was speedily adopted by the gallant hussar of Etiolles.

But when the summer came, and even the lime trees of the Palais-Royal became fragrant with flowers, Peter could no longer resist his inclination to take a furtive peep at the village, and learn, if possible, what report of his disgrace and its origin had reached the farm of Luzières. To Madelaine, he trusted, he might in safety discover himself. From *her* he might ascertain in what light his misfortunes were viewed by his father. Taking a cast, accordingly, from the Quai de la Grève, (already the Golgotha of the capital), in a homeward-bound Bourgogne wine-*barge*, he threw himself on shore near Ris, and, in the dusk of the evening, made his way to Etiolles.

His first impulse was towards Bertin's cottage. It was already dark ; but he knew he should see, even from a distance, the bright light burning on Madelaine's work-table. But no light appeared ! He drew nearer, and, with gigantic strides, overstepped the vineyard clothing the Côte that separated him from the dwelling of his beloved.—Alas ! the shutters were closed.—Nay ! the little pathway leading to the door was so overgrown with weeds and streamers of the Bengal rose trees with which his own hands had adorned it,

that there needed no voice to tell him the house had been long deserted !

A boy came whistling by. "Where are they gone ?" cried Pierre, catching him by the shoulder.

"They ?" replied the lad, suspending his tune.

"Bertin and his daughter !"

"Who are Bertin and his daughter !"

"The people who lived in this cottage."

"Hein ? I don't know—I am not of the *pays*—I am of Ris. Let me go ; I am in haste to get home."

Pierre wrung his hands in despair.

"If you are uneasy to know about the place," said the lad, coming back good-naturedly after going a few steps along the road, "ask at the next cottage. Or, stay—you seem to be in trouble—I will inquire for you." And he hurried off to an adjacent house, while Pierre sunk down on a large stone beside the door, his own heart within him as heavy and as cold ! He was preparing himself to hear the worst.

"*This* is the man who wants to hear about Bertin and his daughter," said the Ris boy, pointing out Pierre as he sat in the shade of the house, with his face covered with his hands, to an old woman, whom he had half-persuaded, half-dragged, from her household occupations, and whom Pierre recognised at once as a motherly

well-wishing neighbour of his dear Madelaine. He had, however, no inclination to accost her; and the new-comer, like most people summoned to impart information, began by exacting it.

"And who are you who want to hear about Madelaine and Bertin?" she demanded.

"Don't plague him—don't you see that he is weeping!" said the lad, in a low voice; and unable to stay out the issue of the colloquy, he went his way, leaving them together.

"And good cause for weeping to those who have any regard for the unlucky family;" ejaculated Marthon, seeing that her companion was unequal to interrogation or reply. "Old Bertin has been in his last bed these seven months, poor soul!—And what sent him thither is best known to those who, high as they are, may find their own day of reckoning in the calendar. Only I know, that if a young lord, like some that I could name, were to come lurking about my premises, night-fall after nightfall, hungering like a wolf after a child of mine——"

Pierre leapt up, and stood listening with clenched hands——

"I would meet his villanies as Père Bertin (rest his soul!) met those of—but *motus!*"

"And the old man is no more?" interrogated Pierre, in a suppressed voice.

"He was carried out feet foremost, just a fortnight and a day after the struggle they had toge-

ther, no further off than yonder old shed where the Count was lying in wait for pretty Madelaine, on the eve of the Assumption. And most people say," continued Marthon, lowering her tone, "most people who have any skill in bruise-ailments and herb-cures, (like poor Pierre of Luzières, who is gone—ay! and may be dead too, for aught we know about the matter,) that a heavy blow, a heavy fall, such as Père Bertin had to bear with, is no easy matter to survive at threescore years and sixteen. And so, you see, his gray hairs were laid under the sod."

"And Madelaine?"—faltered Pierre.

"Oh! Madelaine—there was but one thing for Madelaine to do, if she had listened to my counsel. She might have sheltered with me, poor child, as long as she listed; or she would have been welcome up yonder at Luzières to bed and board. But was it safe for her, Sir, I ask you, to be maundering on here at Etiolles, a poor, defenceless, fatherless girl of eighteen, betrothed to a lad who may have been with the dead this twelvemonth, while a villain's eye was fixed upon her, and a villain's arm strong over her?——"

Pierre gasped for breath.

"And so, on the very night of her father's burial, when I took her to my house to rest among my own young ones——"

("God bless you," ejaculated Pierre.)

"Says I to her, 'Madelaine, child, Etioles is no safe place for *you*. Take my advice; and out of the little money you have gathered from the good man's strong box, pay your way in the *fourgon* that passes yonder through Essonne to Lyons, and go to Madame Vincent, (Suzette of Luzières that was,) who, for Pierre's sake, will give you bread or employment. Unless I am much mistaken, you will find she has news to tell you of persecution borne from the same quarter which has killed your father, and sent you an orphan into the wide world.' "

Marthon paused a moment—for she heard the stranger grinding his teeth beside her. "But Madelaine would not listen."

"She chose to stay *here*?" exclaimed Pierre—"She *did*?"

"Not she; she chose, foolish girl, to go off to Paris, where she has an aunt, poor enough I am afraid, and little able to protect her. But it was no love for her aunt, nor any idle hankering after Paris that took her yonder down the river. It was, that she had a mind to get nearer to Versailles to make inquiries after that unhappy Pierre of hers; for though the old folks at Luzières had contrived to learn all that was to be learned of him, (and bad enough it was for a father to learn,) Madelaine fancied *she* should make out more and better of the lad, and perhaps discover

his place of hiding ; for Madelaine could never be taught to believe him turned to wickedness——”

“ Blessings on her !”

“ And so, to make a long story short, to Paris, Sir, she went ; and not a word more have I ever heard of Madelaine, which is a wrong thing of the girl, considering that——”

“ Is Count Alphonse at Luzières, now ?” inquired Pierre, in a stern voice.

“ Count Alphonse—who said anything of Count Alphonse ?”—cried Marthon.—“ No ! he is not here, he is at court, as such knaves should be ! But who are *you*, that know so much, yet would fain appear to know so little of the family ?”

“ I am Pierre, *mère Marthon*,” said he, timidly offering his hand.

“ Pierre !” she reiterated, bestowing a sonorous salute on either cheek. “ And talking to me out here in the dew, when there is a good chair and a good chopine of wine yonder within.”

“ I have no time to drink, I have no time to rest !” cried he. “ Tell me, however, before I go :—my father—my grandfather—do they believe in the slanders to which I have been sacrificed ?”

“ Not at heart, not at heart ; and yet the doubt troubles them, as you will see when you arrive at Luzières.”

“ I am not going to Luzières,” answered the young man. “ I will never return there till I have

made way in the world, and can present myself with as good a face as when I left the farm. But see them for me to-morrow, my dear good Marthon; and give my duty and obedience to my father; and tell him I am alive, strong, industrious, working hard to prove myself worthier of his family."

"But you must not away, without a word, face to face, with them," cried Marthon, throwing her strong muscular arms about him to detain him. But after hastily wringing her hand in token of farewell, Pierre bounded off along the côte; and ere Marthon recovered her surprise, the sound of his footsteps was lost in the distance. Before Pierre was himself again, two leagues of the road towards Paris had disappeared under his impetuous footsteps; and awful were the projects of vengeance that passed that night through the mind of the wanderer.

It was just eleven months after that eventful visit to Etiolles, that a stout young man, coarsely but creditably habited, and a young girl, neatly attired, and wearing a symbolic bridal *bouquet*, stood at the *Mairie* of the twelfth *arrondissement* of Paris, to inscribe a vow of mutual fidelity between the *citoyen Jean Paul Pierre Hardouin*, born of Etiolles, and the *citoyenne Marie Madelaine Bertin*, of the same. The mayor, in his tri-coloured sash, as he delivered to the young couple the certificate

of their civic union, little imagined by what a series of griefs and dangers that compact had been secured. He saw that the fair features of the bride were attenuated to unnatural delicacy, without dreaming by what bitter privations of food and rest, the young *ouvrière*, in her garret, had fenced herself round against the temptations of vice and the pursuit of an abandoned courtier, until Pierre with unremitting perseverance, discovered her retreat; and came to make her his—and came to make her happy! Nor was the consent of parents wanting to the marriage contract. Immediately after their long delayed reunion, Pierre, by Madelaine's advice, had gone down to Etioilles, to throw himself at his father's feet; and the progress of public events luckily coincided with his own representations, to prove that he had been the victim of villany.

Nor was this his sole obligation to fortune. The rod of vengeance had been taken out of his hands by the interposition of that jealous GOD, who has assumed to himself the right of repaying the injuries of the injured. When Pierre, burning with the desire of retribution, had presented himself, after quitting Marthon, at the hotel St. Aignan in the Faubourg St. Germain, Count Alphonse was already arrested, already in the prison of l'Abbaye, on accusation of incivism.

“I trust I was not unchristianly in my re-

joicing on his downfall," said Pierre, when he recounted to me the history under an oak tree of the forest of Sénart. "But when my good star at last guided me where Madelaine and I were fated to meet again; and, when in her dismantled garret, with her hand fast clasped in mine, she told me the story of her wrongs, and with what calumnies the villain of fine clothes and fine words had assailed me during my absence, and with what insults and cruelties had molested her, God forgive me if I did, in the hour of my intemperance, call upon his mighty name that the utmost measure of his wrath might fall upon the offender.

"And my prayer was accomplished! Figure to yourself, *not' bourgeois*, that one fine morning, just three days after Madelaine and I were one, and we were still dressed out in our wedding best, —we had been over to the Rue du Bac, to get together a few household things at a shop kept by an Etiollian, *un ami du pays*, previous to setting off to Luzières to settle for the remainder of our days. Well, Sir,— we were to pass the place they now call *Place de la Concorde*.—It was called *Place de la Révolution* then, for *there* stood the guillotine under the knife of which the head of the King had already fallen, and hundreds of heads of aristocrats were weekly falling."

"Don't let us go this way," said Madelaine, "perhaps we may meet the *charrette*."

"And if you do," said I, "it is but turning your head aside, not to see the grim faces of those who have been looking with greedy eyes, year after year, upon *our* sufferings,—sufferings too of their own causing."

"Don't talk so, Pierre," said the soft-hearted soul; "there is many an innocent suffering among the guilty. Besides, reflect how many years you and yours ate the bread of the St. Aignans."

"I wish the poor wench had left that name unspoken, Sir, for it called up tumults into my heart which had long been tranquillized. 'Ay,' said I, 'and drank our life-blood in return. But there is a God above all; and theirs will pay for it.'

"And so, being obstinate, I *would* pass the *Place*, for it was a fine, bright, sunshiny day;—and the old groves in the adjoining gardens of the Tuileries were gay with their chestnut blossoms and the air sweet with lilacs. But just as we reached opposite the street leading to the Boulevards, there came a sight that made the very gardens themselves look gloomy; however, no sooner was its coming perceived, than the people gathered forward in all directions, so that, for my life, I could not have dragged off Madelaine through the crowd. Believe me or no, Sir, but from the moment I heard the charioteer flogging on his horses at a distance, and saw the com-

missaries with their staves bound with tri-coloured ribbons, making way among the people, I felt as sure as of a judgment day, that Alphonse St. Aignan was in the cart!—And there, indeed, he sat,—with an old gray-headed priest on one side, and a fair-faced woman on the other, his face white as ashes, and his eyes hollow and dim, as though half dead already. His lips quivered too, but whether from fear, or that he were muttering an *Ave Maria* to keep himself in heart, I cannot say. But just as they came where Madelaine and I were standing in our holiday gear, with the gay sunshine streaming upon us, the care I was taking to support and cheer the poor girl whose head was dropping on my shoulder, attracted his notice, and I saw him cast a glance downwards on us; and there was a bitterness of remorse in the look, which dwelt in my mind for years. Black must be the pang, *not' bourgeois*, that can *add* to the bitterness of such a death as his!

‘Well, well,—there is justice for all men, here or above. And so, Sir, Madelaine and I were soon among the fields again; and cheerful as you may think the glades of Etioles to-day, I warrant you they looked brighter and happier to *us*, who had tasted so much affliction since we left the village. Old Gabriel was gone; but father still sat in his chimney corner, and right glad was he to have us with him again. Still, there was an uneasy thought in his mind.’

“Pierre, my lad,” said he one day soon after my return, “thou know’st that the old Marquis is dead and gone, and the young Count dead and gone; and if they were unlawfully removed, Heaven forgive those that removed them. But thou art to learn that the Countess Alphonse, who is Marchioness now — that is *Citoyenne*, (Mercy me! that I can never bring myself to remember all these changes!) the *Citoyenne* St. Aignan has a young child—a son born since his father was condemned;—and instead of quitting Luzières, as any reasonable soul would do, and making the best of her way to her relations in England and Germany, (for *here*, as she well knows, they are under the *surveillance* of the revolutionary tribunal, whose severities are getting fast from bad to worse, and may soon reach from worse to worst,) nothing will serve her but to talk of the young heir of the house of Luzières, and the allegiance of the tenants, in a touch-me-who-dare sort of style, for which the day is past. —Twice—thrice—I cannot count the times—have I been up to the Château, and ventured to tell her truths she little liked to hear. Only two days ago I presumed to say that since she would not quit the country, she might at least conceal herself here at the farm till the dark days of the times were past. My son, I did not know with whom I had to deal.—You should have heard the clamour

of indignation with which she accused me of insulting her, by inviting her to rest under such a roof as mine !—*She*, a widow, whose husband's headless trunk is lying yonder under the quicklime of the Madelaine !—*she*, a mother, who might preserve her child by so small a concession !”

“ Don't trouble yourself further about her, father,” said I, for I was stung to the quick by his account of the woman's gracelessness. “ Her life is not worth preserving.”

“ Nay,” replied the good old man, “ but *her* father and mine fought together at Fontenoy ; and I have eaten these people's bread ; and for all that is come and gone, I will yet do my best for the family.”

“ Alas ! the time of trial was quickly coming. The period which the bookmen call The Reign of Terror, was at its worst at Paris ; and every now and then, bands of ravagers, who were little other than thieves and banditti, burst out into the provinces on pretences of domiciliary visits and what not ; but in reality, to lay hands on all and everything within their reach ;—burning, murdering, destroying—and without hazard of punishment. One evening, Sir, we were all sitting quietly at the farm, (it was in autumn, and the vintage was just over.) There was my father with his pipe between his lips, and Madelaine with her knitting needles, and I busy in a corner with my osiers,

weaving a basket for my wife—when, all of a sudden, old Castor, the house-dog that lay before the fire, started up and began to yelp like a thing in purgatory ; and as soon as we could still the beast, which was no easy matter, a trampling of many feet was audible, and for a moment we thought it was the vintagers coming home from eating their *soupe de vendanges*. But looking out, I saw a troop of some ten or twelve ill-looking dogs, armed with scythes, and bearing torches ; and, in a moment, the thought struck me they were going up to the Château !

“ Father,” cried I, “ your gun ! Madelaine, up to the granary and lock yourself in without light.” And taking what weapons I could collect, I made off to the village, and, in twenty minutes, gathered together a troop of hardy young fellows, my fellow-labourers, who, for the honour of the *pays*, would do much to defend the Château de Luzières. But by the time we reached the avenue, the old mansion was sending up in two places a dense smoke, which soon burst out into flames ; and all that now remained was to save the lives of those who might be within. The villains were ransacking the house in all directions. But our heart was good. We had a dreadful struggle—a *deadly* struggle. I can scarce talk of it now, Sir ; for, at the close, my poor old father lay dead at the entrance of the Marchioness’s

apartments ; and though the Jacobins were driven off the field, it was not till there was nothing left to save. The flames had gained the mastery ; and as to the woman—the woman whose obstinacy had caused my father's death,—don't ask me, Sir, to tell you all that befel her, or what manner of death she died. Her fate was fearful,—*fearful!*—May it procure her the mercy and pardon of the Almighty !

“It was the dead of the night, Sir, before I got back to the farm ; and I had to press through a crowd of the villagers collected to look upon the fire.

“There's Pierre,” said the women, as I passed ; ‘don't speak to him—don't question him—he has lost his father ! But, thank God, our men have pursued the murderers down into the river, and it will go hard if any one of them escape.’ But why was not Pierre with them, why did he remain behind up at the *Château?*” said one woman. ‘Hush, *imbécille,*’ cried another, ‘can't you guess that he was removing his father's body?’

“But they guessed only half the truth. As soon as I crossed the threshold of the farm, I drew bolt and bar ; and instead of replying to Madelaine's embraces and inquiries after my father—‘Into bed with you,’ I exclaimed ; ‘take this poor orphan into your bosom ; and should

the troop return and force the doors, swear that it is your own.' Then giving into her arms, still covered with his mother's blood and stunned with the blow that finished her, the babe, the last of the St. Aignans, whom I had withdrawn, poor helpless innocent, from its mother's side at the close of the massacre—I again secured the house, and darted off after the assassins.

" Well, Sir, to cut short the history, for to *you*, who are not of the *pays*, it may appear tedious, we adopted the orphan boy for our own. At that time, to be the child of a *ci-devant*, was a bad certificate; and, though it went to my soul to call the babe ours—for we had been but four months married, and my wife's good name was dear to me—to all who were bold enough to say, ' Pierre, is the child thine?' I answered, ' the child is mine.' And so," continued the crayfish-catcher, passing his hand across his eyes, " my father's old chair was removed from beside the hearth, and I wove a wicker-cradle for the orphan to supply its place. To be sure, many in the village must have known that the babe was none of ours; but it was given out that all had perished in the flames at Luzières, and I doubt whether any at Etiolles guessed *whence* we had the infant; more especially when, year after year, as little Albert grew up among us, they saw us working for him as our own, and loving him as

our own; for we *did* love him. Parents could not have loved him better!"

"Were you ever a father, Pierre, that you venture to say *that*?" inquired I.

"No! and I sometimes thank God for it; ay! even now that we are left alone in our old age; for with children of my own, I should have no right to do all I did for Albert. You should have seen him, Sir; what a noble young creature it grew under Madelaine's rearing!—At six years old, not a lad in the village could hold head against Albert!—When I saw the ruins of the Château de Luzieres sold as national property, and the fine avenues cut down, and the gardens made grazing ground, and the fish-pond dried up, and the woods destroyed, I own I could not help sometimes grieving that the little fellow should be deprived of what, after all, was his birthright. And many's the time I have had him kneel down and pray beside me, on a green nook among the plantain trees, where I had taken up my pick, a day or two after the fire, and laid all that I could make out as the remains of my father and the poor foolish Marchioness. I dug but one grave for them, Sir! Think what would have been her rage, had any one whispered to her, during her living days, that her last resting-place would be beside that of old Pierre Hardouin of Luzières.

"Well!—better times were coming! The mad

and the bad were slain in their turn; the blood-thirsty became at length satiated; and at last every man's thoughts seemed to turn upon repairing the mischief that had been done. Ere the waters of the deluge subsided, a mighty name was floating upon their troubled surface. It was that of a great hero; and we became a martial nation; had it been that of a great statesman, we might perhaps have become a commercial one. For, in truth, we were inclined to follow any one who was inclined to lead, with promises of guiding us to happier times. We had wars and battles, ay! and victories, faster than I could count them. But I had other work on hand. We quitted the farm of Luzières when it became a stranger's property, (and, in sooth, the very walls bore with them a host of painful recollections!) and with the amount of my father's savings and my own, purchased the cot that had once been tenanted by Bertin, wherein Madelaine was born, and wherein I still abide; a poor place, you will say, but my own,—a home for me, and a home for Madelaine when I shall be no more. And there it was that Albert grew up upon our knees.

“It was not till he was about ten years old, Sir, that I began to regret I had not the means of giving him as much book-learning as became the blood that was in his veins. By that time,

the hero of the nation had grown tired of being a hero, and got himself anointed Emperor ; and many emigrants had leave to return ; and, among the rest, one who called himself heir to the last Marquis de St. Aignan. To hear this, made Madelaine and me jealous in our minds. We had taught the boy all we knew—it was not much—crayfish-catching and basket-weaving were not for the like of him ; and we had even gone poorly clad and poorly fed, that *Monsieur le Curé* (the very *curés* were back again !) might add to the amount of his knowledge. Even *that*, I fancy, was not much ; and one day when we went to fetch Albert home as usual, the *curé*, who, from his office in the Confessional, knew what was the real parentage of the child, told us we had no right to trifle with Albert's claims, and that we must take him to Paris and reveal all to his family. It was a sore day for us to make up our mind ! Madelaine cried and sobbed, as I had not seen her cry since my father's death ; for we loved the boy so dearly that we fancied every one else must love him as we did, and be mad-eager to take him from us.

“ Not a bit !—For all we could do, or all we could swear, the great lord to whom we addressed ourselves persisted that it was proved by the *procès verbal* of the burning of the Château de Luzières, the Marchioness and her infant had

perished in the conflagration; and instead of providing for Albert's education as we expected, ordered us all three to be thrust out of his hotel into the street, as impostors! It was the happiest evening I ever spent, that on which we got back to Etioilles after this fruitless attempt!—We had done our duty to the lad, and the repulse we met with seemed to render him our own for ever. After rejecting his cousin in the face of his whole establishment, the head of the family could not claim him from us; and never did I see Madelaine caress his curly head so fondly, or call him her own so tenderly as then.

“ ‘ We must content ourselves with less for him,’ said she. ‘ If Albert do not grow up so learned as the clerk of the peace at Corbeil, he will know more than we knew before him; yet we are better respected in the village than even was his father the Marquis!—’

“ With this reasoning, I was forced to content myself; and one must have been difficult indeed not to have been contented with Albert! He was so handsome, so frank, so humane, so laborious, so gay. And what I loved best in him was, that though he was well acquainted with his origin (for how could Madelaine keep such a secret from our nursling?) he never seemed to desire that the mystery should be cleared up.”

“ ‘ My family have cast me off,’ he would say,

‘ I have henceforth none—no family, no friends, no benefactors but you. Love me still, and Albert will be happy; but strive to cause my recognition by the proud man who is willing to take the livery and wages of one whom he holds to be an usurper, and I shall fancy you are tired of your burthen, and grudge me my prospect of tending you, and labouring for you in your old age, as you have tended and laboured for me in my childhood !’

“ There was no answering him !—I loved him too dearly to attempt it !—

“ I would fain linger in my story now, Sir ; for those were the happiest years of my life ! There was sunshine under our roof, there was joy, there was promise. But though I grudge not the time in the telling, your patience must be wasting. On, therefore, on to the end !

“ You may be sure that, loving Albert as we did, something was laid by after the half yearly payment of our contributions to the State, to make up a redemption-fee for our boy, when he too, should be claimed for its service. This sum did we, for security-sake, lodge in the hands of a great notary at Corbeil. Security !—Ere the day arrived when Albert underwent the fate I had borne before him, of falling to the conscription, the guardian of our deposit had made a fraudulent bankruptcy ; and because he saw fit to take

himself off in his carriage to Havre and embark for America, the lad was fain to march off for the army of Germany!—Poor Madelaine was like to break her heart;—so young as he was to leave us, and for such a service!—For all this chanced not till victory had grown weary of hovering over the eagles of France.

“Albert, in spite of his struggle to disguise his joy for fear of giving us pain, was full of glee at his opening prospects of distinction; for still there lived the saying among the people, that every French conscript, on quitting his village, bore in his knapsack the truncheon of a field-marshal!—And so, by way of cheering up Madelaine’s heart on the eve of his departure, I sang our old canteen songs, and told our old bivouac stories of Versailles; and related all I had learned of the glories of Marengo and Austerlitz—and how the dying grenadier’s last moments on the field of battle had been cheered by receiving the cloak of *le petit Caporal* to form his shroud. My blood was warm with wine, and wild with the sort of desperateness that wrings one’s breast into noise at parting with something loved; and when Albert whispered to me—as I waved my old *bonnet de police* to the cry of ‘*Vive l’Empereur!*’—‘The rich manufacturer of Essonne has offered three hundred Napoleons for a substitute for his son—the money would make a rare legacy for

our dear Madelaine !' I could not help replying — '*Nom d'une bombe !* I should like to shew the Corsican's men how the *vieux moustaches of Louis XVI* were put through the movements !—Albert ! my boy, I will bear thee company in thy first campaign.'

" You will think that my project met with opposition from my wife ?—Not a whit ! ' It will be but the further embittering of my tears !' was all she said. ' The time of the boy's absence must be a time of agony ; and I can better bear to be without thee, Pierre, than to think that he, so young, so rash, so tenderly reared by my weak fondness, will be alone, unguided in the hour of danger.' And so, Sir, two fittings out were needed in lieu of one ; and bequeathing Madelaine to the protection of God and the counsel of the good *curé* who took charge of her little fortune, away we went for the army.

" You may guess that the spirit of the lad blazed forth when we reached head-quarters !—Wounded in the very first action, the sight of his own blood, spilt by the white coats, seemed to put the very devil into his young heart. He got the name of the *Lutin* in the regiment, from the pranks he was ever playing, even when the cannon boomed over our heads. But his pranks did not prevent him from being a good soldier ; and they loved a lightsome-hearted lad in those

days; the great generals thought, somehow, that their folly put heart into the men.

“ But, alas! the lucky hour of soldiership was over for France!—Had Albert been born in time to follow the eagle over the Alps, or along the Danube, or across the sea to the Pyramids, there would soon have been a ribbon at his button-hole, and an epaulet on his shoulder;—for the soul of his great grandsire, the old Marquis who fought under Turenne, seemed to be within him. But the second year of our recruitment carried our gallant brigades into the bitter north, which was not made for our Heaven-favoured countrymen to abide in. Even I, a seasoned man, shrunk under the frosts of Moscow; and what were they to a delicate lad (he was scarce sixteen!) like Albert?—Nevertheless, for a time, his high courage bore him up! The heavier our privations, the louder grew his laugh beside the bivouac fire, where the carcase of some half-starved horse was roasting for our supper. But that laugh grew hollow as well as loud; and there was a clear brightness in his eyes which was more deadly to me to look upon, than the fire of the enemy. And then there came defeat—and after defeat, retreat—and who does not know the calamities of a defeated and retreating army? The lad was growing discouraged; and I used to talk of home to him in our long, wearying, hungering marches,

as the trumpets are blown on the field of battle to inspirit man and horse. And sometimes he tried to listen when I talked of the green alleys of the forest of Sénart, and the wild roses entangling its paths, and the green vineyards of Etioilles, and the soft—soft silver current of the Seine. But those soothing words did not prevent that there were wildernesses of snow around us, and the very atmosphere congealing over our heads!

“ ‘ *Mon père,*’ whispered the lad, one night, as the blood burst from his ears and nostrils—‘ had I been a few years older, I might have borne it; —but ’tis only a veteran such as thou who can survive this trying time, to die upon the field of battle. *Mon père ! mon bienfaiteur !* forgive me for my weakness!’

For some minutes Pierre could not utter a syllable. To aid him in his story, I ventured to observe—

“ And the time came, I fear, when he could drag his legs no further; and you were forced to leave poor Albert in the rear?”

“ To abandon him?”—cried Pierre, “ No! I do not deserve that you should think it of me! Abandon him?—no, no, no!—When his strength utterly failed him, and still there was no chance but to march on or fall into the hands of the enemy, I threw aside bag and baggage, and strapped the fainting child to my shoulders;

(his weight was but as a feather) ; and, after the first few hours, I did not dare speak to him to ask how he fared, lest, peradventure, there should be no reply. And again, after a time, I thought his limbs grew more listless—and then stiff—and then I murmured to myself—Madelaine—Madelaine—how shall I tell thee of this?—And my murmurs were drowned by hoarse cries of ‘march!’ at every pause of the battalion, and by the grumblings of the men, with whom all hope was over!—

“ At last one of them, an old comrade, hallooed to me, ‘ Pierre! fling aside thy burthen—thy labour is in vain—the boy is dead!’ And I cursed him for the word, and would not listen! And another came and said, ‘ the corpse is heavy for thee—cast it down!’—Oh! God had they known what heaviness was in my heart!

“ Even when I knew that he was surely, surely gone, (for the locks of his hair grew frozen where his blessed head lay, stonelike, on my shoulder,) I bore him on and on;—for I chose not to leave him for a prey to the wolves of the Borysthenes; and I knew that my hopes were gone, by the bursting forth of my words; for *now* I talked to him—*now*, again and again, I called upon him by name, as I tottered onwards through the snow.—I had nothing more to learn from his silence!

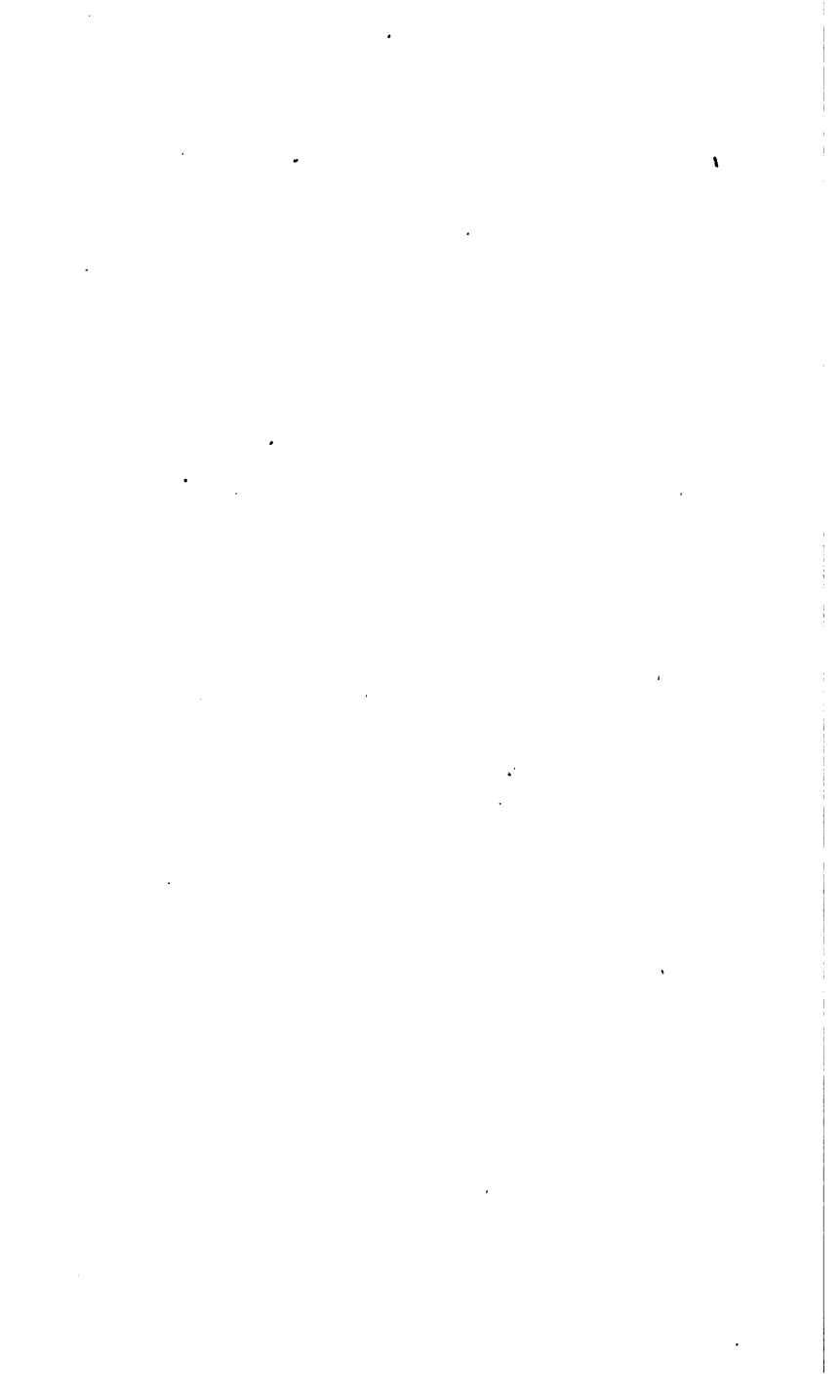
"That night, Sir, I scooped away the snow, and dug my boy a grave on the outskirts of the village where we bivouacked for the night. 'Twas a rude place;—but still 'twas within reach of a Christian bell. I knew it was!—for all night I lay upon the grave; the striking of the church clock warning me, from hour to hour, that the precious minutes were passing I might remain with him!—

"The word of command, when daylight came, sounded hoarse as the cry of a raven in my ears; and yet I dared not disobey the call, for it reminded me that Madelaine was waiting beside her hearthstone for tidings of those she loved."

There are some mysteries of sorrow which it appears almost sacrilegious to unveil; and I will therefore dwell no longer upon the sufferings of Pierre, or describe the scorching tears that poured from the old man's eyes. On his return to Etiolles, it appeared the curé's abode had been sacked by the Prussians, and Pierre's old age made destitute as well as childless.—Suzette, too, was dead.—The old people were alone.

"Yet you see we have borne it all!" he ejaculated, in conclusion; "and our days do not pass in tribulation, for we feel that the lapse of each brings us nearer to the lad. Yes!—we shall soon be with Albert; and, even now, I often fancy he is beside me, and commune with

him by the river-side where we used to labour together, or in the woods of Luzières, or in the forest of Sénart. You see, Sir, God is merciful. He gave it to us to atone, by our own expiation, the feeling of exultation with which I had beheld the execution of the Marquis; and still vouchsafes His protection and consolations, even to so humble a child of the dust, as PIERRE L'ECREVISSIER."



THE BURGHER OF ST. GALL.

THE BURGHER OF ST. GALL.

“ I will visit the sins of the fathers upon the children.”

EXODUS.

THE Wallensee has enjoyed the privilege of being the least quoted and the least be-rhymed, of all the lakes of Switzerland. From the pages of Rousseau the sublime, to those of d'Arlincourt the ridiculous, Leman, Uri, and Zurich have undergone their sentence of picturesquification ; but the Lake of Wallenstadt is at present tolerably unpolluted by the dabbling of the Muses. We know not of a single stanza in which it figures. Sans glaciers, sans avalanches, sans ravines, sans pine forests, sans every thing that tends to arouse poetical associations, Childe Harold himself might have pursued his Pilgrimage along its shores without experiencing a single paroxysm of inspiration.

Yet is not the Wallensee destitute of sylvan graces and attractions. In many portions of the shore, scarpèd rocks rise majestically above the

waters, crowned by fertile meadows, where herds of goats and cattle are seen disporting; while, sheltered in the nooks and valleys of the inferior bank, lie thriving farms and substantial country houses, cozily surrounded by their gardens, groves, and orchards. The very surface of the lake presents, at all seasons, an animated picture. Affording a ready thoroughfare for the commerce between Zurich and the Italian States, the glassy level is freely dotted over with passage and trading boats, in addition to the little fishing skiffs which supply the town of Wesen and the adjoining Cantons, with the trout, whose excellence has imparted gastronomic fame to the waters of the Wallensee.

At no great distance from the village of Quinten, the site of which may be distinguished as the noblest and most picturesque spot of the environs of Wesen, the notice of the traveller is attracted by a quaint-looking commodious mansion—something between the *maison de campagne* of a wealthy burgher and the farm of a flourishing cultivator,—hedged in with extensive orchards of cherry and pear trees; but sheltered immediately round the house and offices by a dense grove of sycamores and chestnuts, while here and there a feathery poplar affords a landmark for the navigators of the lake.

A small pleasure garden shelves by a regular

descent of terraces, from the brick façade of Engafeld to the lake below ; if garden, a spot can be called, where detached statues of ancient Helvetian worthies, in *terra cotta*, stand thicker than the box trees and rhododendron bushes, transplanted thither from the mountain-passes of the Grisons—a goodly, but fantastic company, which, viewed from the lake on a dazzling summer day, might be mistaken for a band of antics playing off their mummeries for the diversion of the inhabitants of the villa.

But at the period of which we are about to treat, the people of Engafeld, like Brutus in the play, were not of a “gamesome” temperament. Abel Morier, the wealthy proprietor of the place, was a man of grave demeanour and sober habits, some fifty years of age, “or, by’r lady, inclining to threescore ;” and assuming, in costume and aspect, the square-cut shape and pastime-shunning principles of a Züricher. His features, nevertheless, retained lineaments of considerable beauty. His person was strikingly commanding ; and when sometimes met sauntering alone among the pastures of Engafeld, with the autumn breezes blowing back the grey hair from his uncovered forehead, it was difficult to see a finer figure.

In his association with his neighbours, however, the benevolent expression of his countenance was

too apt to be overclouded; and Abel was one whom all men respected, but few men loved. Yet there was not a single fault to lay to his charge. He was a liberal master,—exact in all his dealings—charitable to the poor—equitable with the rich. But he was a precisian;—a being above the pleasant frailties of human nature;—not to be surprised into conviviality, not to be tickled into mirth. His virtues were as an armour about his person; and the very shadow of the man might have borne witness to his impeccable infallibility.

All this rigidity of principle suited well, meanwhile, with his position in the world. Abel, though a summer visiter to the green pastures of Engafeld, was, in fact, a burgher of St. Gall; the chief partner in the most considerable muslin-factory of that most industrious town. To *his* looms the fair damsels of Berne were indebted for their filmy veils. The northern provinces of Italy despatched their traders annually to the warehouses of “Morier and Brenzel,” for the provision of the year; while Basle afforded an entrepôt for a similar distribution to the belles of Fribourg and the two Brisachs. Not a more flourishing manufacturing town in all Switzerland than St. Gall; not a more flourishing manufacturer in St. Gall than Abel Morier of Engafeld. His workmen so comfortably conditioned; his

factory—so airy—so commodious—and aspiring to even a few British novelties of machinery. Nay, travellers have been heard to revert to the dingy glories of Paisley and Glasgow while surveying the place, without much disparagement to the more simple processes still pursued by the patient Helvetian of St. Gall.

The only unaccountable peculiarity, meanwhile, of the worthy Abel's character, consisted in the fact that, being a widower, and having but an only son to inherit his ample belongings and succeed him in the manufactory, he took so little pleasure in young Gottfried's company, as to have kept him for many years at a distance from home ;—first, for the completion of his education at the University of Basle ; and latterly, as clerk or secretary in the counting-house of one of his father's commercial correspondents at Berne.

It was not, however, that the old man was an *indifferent* parent. Gottfried Morier was more liberally endowed, and had received higher accomplishments than most young men of his condition. Once or twice every year, Abel made a journey to visit him ; and was gratified to be interrogated by his neighbours on his return, and bear witness to the wondrous progress of the boy, and subsequently to the high character acquired by the young accomptant. There were, in fact, many things to be proud of in a son like

Gottfried;—beauty and activity of person, goodness, temper, gentleness, grace; and although no positive prodigy of wit or learning, his studies raised him far beyond the common level of enlightenment among the simple St. Gallois. In the gay circles of the more aristocratic city of Berne, he passed for an accomplished cavalier,—*too* accomplished, it might be, to content himself hereafter with the dull sobriety of Engafeld, or the puritanism of his native province.

Many of those who found occasion to blame Abel Morier's unparental coolness in estranging Gottfried from his domestic fireside, scrupled not at the same time, to predict that he would live to repent having afforded to his son a training so inconsistent with his future course of life. But it was fit that a man so free from backsliding should have something to repent; nor was an error of judgment much to lay to his charge, as the solitary blot upon a blameless life!

Some said, indeed, some enviers—(for what individual so pure and prosperous ever yet escaped envy?)—that Abel cherished a secret arrogance of nature, and was pursuing his career of industry and frugality with the intention of elevating his heir to a condition of life far higher than his own; that he was secretly apprehensive lest, in settling at St. Gall among the friends and companions of his childhood, Gottfried might be

tempted to form connexions with those of his own degree, and perhaps even bestow his hand upon the obscure daughter of some manufacturer, the mere equal of his father. But this opinion was chiefly circulated by certain mothers blest with a thriving family of daughters, to whom a home at Engafeld afforded an enticing but hopeless perspective; for never were seen two individuals less presumptuous in their bearing towards their countrymen and neighbours, than both the elder and the younger Morier.

Neighbours, however, was a term hardly to be used by Gottfried, for during the last five years, he had not five times visited St. Gall; having been but once permitted to spend a few weeks among the verdant solitudes of Engafeld, when despatched home to his native air by his Bernese employers, in the view of accelerating his convalescence after a severe sickness.

That once, however, was enough!—That once, against which old Abel had taken so many precautions, decided the destinies of Gottfried: He came unannounced, and arrived unwelcomed at his father's country-seat; for notwithstanding the manifest ravages which disease had made upon the person of the young man, Abel persisted in asserting that he would have done better to remain at Berne; that if he needs must travel, goat's whey and southern air would have afforded

him better aid to recovery; and that since he had been actually counselled by the physicians to try the bracing atmosphere of the Wallensee, it was at least his duty to have apprized his father of his intention, and ascertained whether his presence were desired. Poor Gottfried was profoundly mortified. All his father's liberalities and benefactions could not repay so cruel a manifestation of parental estrangement; and, enfeebled by indisposition, he turned away his head and wept, that he should find himself thus repulsed at the threshold of the home of his childhood.

It unluckily happened, indeed, that, at that moment, *other* visitors were favoured guests at Engafeld. Dietrich Brenzel, the partner of Abel's commercial establishment, chanced to be sojourning, with his fair daughter Elzbeth, at the villa of the Wallensee. But there were rooms enough in the rumbling old mansion-house to have afforded hospitality to half the burghers of the town council of St. Gall; and, as Barbely, the old Grison housekeeper of Engafeld, was heard to mutter, on observing the ungracious mode of her master's reception of his son, "*How* could Master Gottfried's visit be better timed, than when the fatted calf was already slain to do honour to the Brenzel family; when the youths of the canton were about to assemble at

Wallenstadt for their annual prize-shooting; and when Ma'mselle Elzbeth was so sadly in want of a companion to row her upon the lake, wander with her among the rocks of Quinten, and help her to gather plants among the hills for her favourite herbal?"

To be sure (as even Barbely herself, sand-blind, as she was, was discerning enough to perceive,) *these* were tasks which old Abel himself seemed well inclined to monopolize; and had it not been for the persevering rigidity of his demeanour and sobriety of his discourse, in all things strictly becoming the reverend elder, the housekeeper might have been tempted to apprehend that her own office would one day be rendered superfluous, by the intervention of a young and active mistress in the household at Engafeld.

On many accounts, however, such a suggestion could not be supposed to regard young Elzbeth Brenzel. Gay as a bird,—light-hearted, light-headed, light-footed,—not even the gravity of Abel's presence could repress the liveliness of her sallies, or control the vivacity of her movements. Enchanted to escape from the close confinement of St. Gall, where her father assumed the personal superintendence of the manufactory, the young girl seemed as if she could not sufficiently luxuriate in the rural liberty of Engafeld.

Her father, in early life unfortunate, and who was still, although raised from indigence by the friendly interposition of his partner, far from emulating the opulence of Abel, had no residence of his own to initiate her into the pleasures of a country life; and it went near to raise a smile upon the saturnine visage of Morier, to observe how Elzbeth, on her first arrival at Engafeld, flew like a child from terrace to terrace, from flower to flower,—how her eyes glistened with delight as their boat glided over the surface of the lake, amid the triumphal glories of a crimson sunset,—how the flocks and herds, and broods of domestic creatures, afforded to her unpractised eye objects of wonder and inquiry,—how every patch of moss upon the ancient trunks of the cherry-orchard attracted her attention,—how she carolled with the birds at day dawn, and returned gently homewards in the dews of the evening, with words of greeting for the shepherd as he folded his flock, or the farm-wench as she chased back the guinea-fowls from roosting in the hedge-rows.

“ Elzbeth ought never to quit Engafeld,—she is so merry and so happy here,” observed Abel, with a grim smile, as she sat down to preside over his abounding supper-table, after a day spent in these simple enjoyments; while her father, patting her fair shoulder, or stroking her neatly-

plaited tresses, would answer, "And *where* is not my Liesly merry and happy?—Greensward or city flagstone—her step is always light! Liesly has her father's heart,—never clouded, unless when the shadow of trouble is over those she loves. Eh! girl—say I not truly?—Hast not thy father's heart?"

And as Elzbeth threw her arms tenderly around the neck of Brenzel in reply, a stranger might have inferred from the heavy sighs with which Abel sat regarding them, that he was angry with himself for finding so much loveliness in the young maiden's beauty, and so much attraction in her tenderness of nature.

But all this cheerful domestic intercourse was interrupted by the arrival of Gottfried. Abel Morier's whole nature seemed changed by this accidental thwarting of his authority. He grew peevish and morose, even with his favourite Elzbeth; and was evidently jealous of every gentle word, and every courteous look she deigned to bestow upon his son. Young Gottfried had been, during his mother's lifetime, the companion of Liesly's childhood; and she had so many reminiscences to compare with his, and so many inquiries to make of the travelled schola, touching the customs of Basle, and the fashions of the capital, that their conversation was never likely to be exhausted.

They had parted when too young to quarrel—they met again when too old to indulge in so dangerous a familiarity. They had never offended each other—were never likely to offend; and so well matched and handsome a couple might have been expected to excite a sympathy in all beholders, but that from the moment Elzbeth's blue eyes beamed kindly upon Gottfried on his arrival, old Abel turned away from her with indignation; and that from the moment Gottfried began to reply with spirit to her lively sallies, his father silenced him with words of severe and unprovoked reproof.

Dietrich Brenzel was, unluckily, the last man on earth to have been desired as a fourth party in a quartette of this unharmonious description. He was a wag—

The best natured man with the worst natured muse;

and all he said or did with a view to conciliate matters, tended to increase the family dissension. He was always cutting ill-timed jests, and launching significant looks—always bursting into fits of inopportune laughter, and pointing out to notice things which it would have been discreet to pass over without remark. Although not wealthy after the measure of Morier's wealth, yet as Elzbeth was an only child, and his sole

inheritress, there was no such vast disparity between the young people as to render their growing attachment a necessary matter of interdiction; for the superiority which the proprietor of Engafeld maintained on the score of worldly gear, was decidedly on Brenzel's side in the question of descent. The Moriers were the first of their name known in the canton; while the Brenzels, direct descendants from the great Winkelried, were connected with several of the leading families of Argonia.

Attributing, therefore, the old gentleman's peevishness solely to a sneaking partiality for his daughter, Dietrich gave no quarter to his partner—but laughed till his own unmeaning grey eyes overflowed with tears, at the mere notion of the stern, saturnine Abel, indulging in a hope of rendering himself acceptable to the sportive, sunny-hearted, gay-voiced child of his affections!—Abel Morier and Elzbeth Brenzel!—No wonder the mere surmise of such a courtship moved the facetious Dietrich to the utmost extravagance of merriment!

Now—the sober burgher of St. Gall was, by temperament and habit, a hater of jokes and jokers. Unless when pretty Liesly uttered a merry conceit in his presence, (previous to Gottfried's arrival,) he was never known to relax into a smile at such attempts. Yet, with Brenzel's

provoking pleasantries, he had unlimited patience. In whatever absurdities of word or deed Brenzel chose to indulge in his presence, all seemed sacred in his sight. He bore with nods and becks, and winkings, and all the punchings in the side or slaps upon the shoulder, which his waggish partner chose to inflict upon him, as resignedly as he would have submitted to a dispensation of Providence.

There was something almost affecting, indeed, in the humility of his forbearance on such occasions ;—for it could arise only from the circumstance that Brenzel was deeply his debtor in a wordly point of view ; from the generosity which forebore to retaliate upon one whom he had deeply obliged. Abel had taken Brenzel and his wife under the shelter of his dwelling, when the chances of war rendered them homeless ;—had fed them when starvation would else have overtaken the destitute family ; and, above all, had placed Dietrich in a career of industry which enabled him to secure his own independence. It was impossible, therefore, to deal with him as with other men. Obtuse as were the faculties of Brenzel's mind, even *he* could not but have winced, if bitterly reproved, by so mighty and providential a benefactor.

Elzbeth knew not as yet the full extent of their obligations to her father's partner. She

had been told by Brenzel to reverence Abel Mörri, as their "best friend;" but had taken the word "friend," in its common acceptation of fellowship and kindness. She knew not that they had been indebted to him for bread; she knew not that he had clothed them and cherished them when they were abandoned by all the world. Had she, indeed, been aware of this afflicting weight of obligation, poor Liesly might, perhaps, have evinced more deference towards his prejudices, or more gratitude for his passion, and been less frank in her display of preference for her offending Gottfried.

But, encouraged by her father's jocularities, she saw nothing but what was ludicrous in the fondness of the doating Abel; nothing but what was gratifying in the half-concealed tenderness of his son. Nor could she conceal her delight in Gottfried's society; for, cherishing no blameable sentiments, and for long years the idol of her father's and Abel's fire-side, she had been accustomed to conceal nothing; and scarcely had the young man passed a week at Engafeld, when he became so universal a favourite, so much an object of admiration to his father's people and of regard to his father's friends, that her enthusiasm in his favour seemed fully justified.

The summer was in its prime, and the young men of the canton were used, by immemorial

custom, to assemble, on the eve of St. John, for the national pastime of prize-shooting. The target was set up, on these occasions, in a green meadow, adjoining the farm of Engafeld, commanding, through a wild thicket of maple and hazel bushes, delicious glimpses of the glittering waters of the Wallensee; and no sooner did Gottfried ascertain from old Brenzel his intention of being present with his daughter at the distribution of the prizes, than he hastened to enrol his own name in the list of competitors.

A skilful marksman, he felt satisfied that the excitement of Elzbeth's presence would secure to him a distinction highly prized among Switzers of every degree; and when the eventful evening came,—the mild, balmy-breathing summer evening appointed for the competition,—and he discerned from the terraces of Engafeld a hundred boats with gay awnings and gaudy streamers, making their way over the limpid waters towards the landing-place, from Wesen, from Wallenstadt, from Quinten, from all the numerous villages nestling amid the coppiced shores of the Wallensee, and heard the simple strains of rustic music mingling at intervals with the shouts and laughter of the assembling peasantry, (interrupted only by old Dietrich's merry jests upon his approaching defeat, and the absurdity of a convalescent, with a feeble arm like his, presuming

to take share in the sport,)—Gottfried's heart began to beat with anticipation, and his cheeks became flushed, and his eyes sparkled with eagerness. For Liesly was to be present at the public trial of his skill: Liesly, whose glossy tresses were already braided with more than their usual neatness for the occasion, her trimly feet prepared for the dance upon the greensward, destined to terminate the festival; her smiles brighter than ever, and her voice more sweet and encouraging.

It was provoking enough to Gottfried that he could not offer his services as her escort to the meadow, where the *Tirage* was about to take place. But so public a display of gallantry was at variance with the customs and prejudices of the canton; where even dancing is a thing of annual toleration, interdicted at all festive meetings, with the single exception of the national prize-shooting; and Dietrich, impatient to be among the revellers, and greet his friends and gossips from Wallenstadt and Wesen, soon set off with his merry daughter hanging upon his arm; pausing every now and then, at her bidding, that she might seek a fresher branch of periwinkle to bind round her straw hat, or, perhaps, that she might peep slyly back through the bushes, and ascertain whether Gottfried were still watching her progress. Abel, meanwhile,

had from the first steadfastly declined being of their company. He was no lover of such scenes; and his friends conscious, perhaps that his harsh, reproving brow, would only impose a restraint upon their pleasures, used no effort to induce him to alter his determination.

But *who* could have uttered a harsh word, or looked with a reproving eye, upon the innocent hilarity presented by that joyous scene?—All the families of the village environs collected in happy groups; from the gray-haired patriarch in his antiquated suit of hoddie grey, to the young child, clinging in sportive bashfulness to the starched muslin apron of its mother's holiday attire;—costumes of every canton, visitors of every age, of every degree, with the good old pastor of Quinten, progressing from group to group, from household to household, cheering the aged with congratulations that they were in health to come forth and witness another anniversary of the *Tirage* of the Wallensee, and encouraging the young with many a harmless jest, too measured in its mirth to weaken their habitual reverence towards his sanctity of office! The summer grass crushed by hundreds and hundreds of feet, sent forth a precious fragrance; the hedges, with their garlands of wild roses, seemed expressly decorated for the *fête*; and the hum of happy greetings and quiet mirth, imparted a sweet and auspicious

influence, such as a simple summer festival, with the green turf below, and the blue heavens above, rarely fails to produce upon the feelings.

But all was on a sudden hushed !—The solemnity was about to begin, as national solemnities are apt to begin in those simple valleys,—with a devotional exercise. As a prelude to the sports of the evening, the musicians struck up the strains of Luther's Hymn;—and, in a moment, every head was uncovered, and every voice silenced; till, as the concluding cadence poured its mellow notes upon the air, the venerable pastor stretched forth his arms towards the multitude, as if bestowing a silent benediction upon the happy flock committed to his charge.

A short pause, and the discharge of a small field-piece stationed on the platform overlooking the lake, gave the signal that the sports were about to commence; when the syndic of Wessen, advancing towards the space marked off by ropes around the target to secure the marksmen from interruption, held forth to the young competitors the bag of numbers from which lots were to be drawn, to decide their order of precedence in the contest.

“But where is Gottfried?”—cried Elzbeth, receding from the company of a gay party of friends from Wallenstadt, among whom she had been standing, looking out anxiously among the

crowd for young Morier's arrival. "Gottfried promised to follow us,—he should be already here. Father—dear father!—step to the gate leading from the Engafeld meadows. Call aloud! Tell him he will be too late—loiterer that he is,—what, *what* can have detained him!"

And Elzbeth had no longer an ear for her prattling companions; no longer an eye for the beauty of the green meadow, and its flaunting multitude;—she even took no heed of the cheerful raillery of the good pastor, who stood noting and wondering at her agitation.

But the ceremony proceeded;—the lots were drawn; and the single number left in the bag fell necessarily to the share of the absent one. It assigned him a fourth place among the competitors.

"Who claims the stake for Gottfried Morier of Engafeld?"—inquired the syndic, in a loud voice; while the eager marksmen began to station themselves at their post. And no one answered; for to no one had the young man assigned the commission. "Is there no friend of Gottfried Morier's here?"—again demanded the President, in an audible voice. "Is he not coming, or has he deputed none to represent him?"—But still no one answered; for old Brenzel was away, watching beside the Engafeld pathway; and the young maid, his daughter trembled to come forth

and speak before so numerous an assemblage. But when, for the third and last time, (while the first pretendant on the list stood chafing with his rifle in his hand, impatiently waiting the signal to fire) the syndic inquired, "Does no person claim the number of Gottfried Morier?" Liesly overmastered her timidity, and making her way through the throng, replied in a firm accent, "I do! Gottfried will be here anon!"—Then shrinking from the notice her movement and the loveliness it gave to view had attracted, and, covered with blushes at the notion of the inferences likely to be deduced from her interference, she shrank back through the crowd towards the furthestmost hedge-row; and again looked forth anxiously for the coming of the truant.

But no Gottfried was in sight! The eager spectators now formed a dense mass around the ropes marking off the lists of the *Tirage*, breathless with expectation; and suddenly a smart detonation smote the air, followed by a boisterous and deafening shout of applause. It was Gabriel Melmann's shot, a marksman of eminent skill. Yet Liesly cared not to inquire or examine how near the white his bullet had pierced the target; her bright eyes were strained towards the pathway, in hopes to gain a distant glimpse of Gottfried.

"He will be too late—he will lose his turn!"

she cried, when she beheld her father trudging onwards towards Engafeld; and, lo! a second report, and again a loud, loud shout of triumph served only to augment her uneasiness.

"Some mischief must have befallen him; what, what can have detained him?" exclaimed poor Liesly, as her father, at length renouncing his hopeless pursuit, turned anew towards the prize meadow and rejoined her.

"Some whim of my good friend Abel!"—answered Dietrich, in a tone of vexation. "But 'tis useless thinking on't, so let us not longer lose the sight of the *Tirage*." And he would have hurried his daughter through the crowd towards the place reserved for her on the bench appropriated to the family of the syndic and the leading ladies of the canton.

"No, no, father. Let us return to the farm. I have no further interest here!"—said poor Elzbeth, despondingly, when she heard the third shot fired, and knew that Gottfried, by his non-appearance had now forfeited his chance,—Gottfried, who had been so sanguine of success, and who, as victor of the evening, had already bespoken her hand to be his partner in the dance. "Let us go back to Engafeld, father: I care not to witness the prize-shooting!"

"Is the girl crazed?" cried Dietrich. "*Not* stay to see the sport?—*not* stay to join the dancers?—

not stay to drink a glass with good Master Melmann of Wesen, and worthy Master Zimmerman of Wallenstadt, and——”

“No, dear, dear father, no!—I must, I *must* go home!” cried Liesly, clinging to his arm, and guiding his resisting steps towards the pathway. “The evening sun has dazzled my eyes, and I am sick at heart!”

“The sun has dazzled them with a vengeance, my poor child!” replied the old man; having ascertained by a glance at his Liesly’s face, that her eyes were red with tears, and her pretty lips quivering with emotion. “On, then, to Engelfeld, since it must needs be so; and let us hear what the good-for-nothing has to say in his defence.”

Field after field they crossed, but no Gottfried met them by the way; and Elzbeth, with a woman’s tact, inferred that he had never even followed them—for *there* lay the branches of periwinkle she had scattered on the path, every leaf of which she knew would have been carefully gathered up and treasured by her young adorer. They reached the garden gate; still no Gottfried was there! They ascended the stone steps of the portal, and entered the vast stuccoed dining-chamber in which the family were accustomed to pass the afternoon; but still, still no Gottfried!

“Where is that graceless, loitering, truant boy

of yours?"—cried Dietrich, addressing himself to old Morier, who occupied his usual patriarchal chair of carved oak, beside the table. But Abel, thus interrogated, removed not his hands from before his face, nor his elbows from their resting-place.

"He has forfeited his chance at the prize-shooting,—a blockhead!" pursued Brenzel.—"Whither can he have betaken himself, and what can he be about?"

"Obeying the commands of his father!"—replied Abel Morier, in a hoarse voice. "My son is already on the road, returning to his duties at Berne. Since he is so re-established in health as to have strength to waste on wanton and idle exercises, Gottfried is surely well enough to fulfil his engagements to his employers."

"And you have actually sent off the poor lad at a minute's warning, while the music was sounding in his ears, and my Liesly waiting for his hand to lead her to the dance?" cried Dietrich, with indignation. "Fie upon you,—fie upon you, for a churl!—There is not another father in the canton who would have found it in his heart to deal so ungraciously with an only son,—and such a son as Gottfried!"

"I am master of my own actions, master of my own son, master of my own dwelling!" answered Abel, gravely; having noted, by a furtive glance

that Elzbeth, pale as death, had thrown herself upon the nearest seat, and was panting almost to suffocation at the announcement of Gottfried's departure. "Say no more, therefore on the subject, friend Brenzel. What is writ, is writ; what is done, is done. Reasons have I for my proceedings, which need not be at every man's disposal."

"Reasons!"—reiterated Dietrich, buttoning and unbuttoning his vest of ceremony, in the tumult of his emotions. "Reason seems to have abandoned you!—Your dealings"—

"Hush! dearest father, hush!" whispered Liesly, rising and throwing her arms around the old man's neck, apprehensive that he was about to widen the breach between Abel and his son, by ill-timed reflections. "Give me your arm, that I may reach my chamber. Give me your arm, father. Think only of your Elzbeth; and disquiet not your mind with fruitless irritation."

But the next day, when the midsummer sunshine streamed upon Engafeld, as if to bake with fiercer calcination its regiment of glowing garden gods, it shone in vain for Elzbeth!—From that time, she took no further pleasure in the freshness of the flowers, the folding of the flocks, or the even-song of the distant herdsmen. Her head drooped—her heart drooped. She had lost her young companion; lost him, too, by the exercise of parental tyranny. The shores of the

Wallensee had no further charm in her eyes ; and at her earnest desire, her father soon fixed the day for their return to St. Gall.

Abel Morier tried to acquiesce cheerfully in their arrangements. It was his intention to remain at the farm till the close of the harvest ; but he was obliged to concur in the opinion expressed by Dietrich, that although the overseer was trustworthy, and the workmen were diligent, it was indispensable to the interests of the manufactory for one or other of the partners to be on the spot.

" I perceive that you are offended with me, Liesly," said the old man to his gentle guest, as he met her wandering at earliest morn under the shade of the sycamore trees, on the day appointed for her departure. " You resent the exercise of my lawful authority over my son ; you resent the fondness of my more than fatherly affection for yourself."

" No !" faltered Elzbeth, in a scarcely audible voice, and turning away her face to conceal her tears. " What right have I to be resentful ? *My* father is poor : the father of Gottfried, rich ; is he not, therefore, justified in interposing between the friendship of our young hearts ?"

" And such, then, is Liesly's judgment of the views and motives of Abel Morier !" cried the old man, in a broken voice ; " such is the opinion

which my tenderness towards her from her youth upwards, has entitled her to form!"

Elzbeth, moved by the pathetic inflexion of his voice, was about to modify the harshness of her former expressions; when, casting her eyes upon Abel as she prepared herself to speak, the looks of tender and rapturous fondness she detected fixed upon herself, so moved her disgust, that involuntarily she exclaimed,—“ I ask no tenderness, I prize no predilection, so contrary to the instigations of nature.”

“ Child, child !” cried Morier, passionately clasping his hands—(and the vehemence of his emotion afforded a strange contrast to his ordinary immobility of aspect)—“ In love like mine, the voice of nature speaks, and nature only. The boy Gottfried, or young Gabriel Melmann, or other suitors for your hand, are moved by comeliness of feature, or their fancy of the passing hour. But I, Liesly, *I* have hung over your cradle, fostered your childhood, watched your growing intelligence, gloried in your well-doing, your maiden-modesty, your humble piety.”

“ Ask me not to be grateful for your praises,” interrupted Elzbeth, hastening her return towards the house, in order to free herself from so embarrassing a companion : “ this is not the moment in which I can even thank you for former kindness.”

"You hate me, then!" cried the old man piteously. "What, what must I do to recover my place in your esteem?"

"Be just towards your son," said Elzbeth Brenzel, with firmness. "Recall him to St. Gall, award him the station he ought to occupy in your household"——

"And were I so weak as to comply with your conditions, Elzbeth," interrupted Abel, in a subdued tone, "would you give me your promise, in the sight of God, that no word, or look of love, should ever pass between you? Would you swear to me that no protestations, no entreaties should ever induce you to yield your hand to Gottfried?"

"I would *not*. No! you have no right to demand such a concession at my hands!" cried Liesly, after a momentary pause.

"Unhappy girl! Know that it is my *mercy* which dictates the demand!" said Abel Morier while a thousand passionate emotions contended in his face. "By the eternal Heaven above our heads, I swear to you that sooner than you should become the bride of Gottfried"——

But he spoke in vain. Anticipating the fearful malediction that was to follow, Elzbeth had hastily escaped from his side, and closing her ears against his imprecations, fled towards the house, and rejoined her father; from whose side she was careful

never to be a moment separated till, an hour or two afterwards, they ascended together the *carriole* which was to convey them from Engafeld.

“ God be with you, Liesly ! God be with you ! ” ejaculated old Abel, as she passed the threshold ; but Liesly had not sufficient command over her feelings to reiterate the benediction.—And in this spirit of estrangement they parted.—

The summer waned slowly and sadly away. The harvest ripened on the plains,—the grapes mellowed in the vineyard,—the leaves sickened and decayed in the woods ; but Abel Morier spoke not in his letters to his partner, of returning to his winter domicile at St. Gall. The business of the manufactory proceeded as usual : but the chief proprietor seemed to take no heed of its prosperity.

And it was well he came not ; for Dietrich and his daughter would have found it impossible to greet him with their usual welcome, seeing that shortly after their return from Engafeld, Gottfried had found means to open a communication with both,—with Elzbeth, to assure her of his continued and unalterable attachment,—with Dietrich to satisfy him that filial obedience alone prevented him from pursuing his claims to the hand of his daughter.

“ Time may remove or soften my father’s prejudices,” wrote the sanguine young lover. “ Deign,

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therefore, to be patient with us ; let my precious Liesly but confirm my hopes by a promise of constancy, and I shall proceed with cheerfulness in the path of duty he has traced for me. Perhaps, in another year, we may conquer his acquiescence, by my submission."

And neither Brenzel nor his daughter had courage to augment the distresses of their young friend, by the manifestation of a contrary opinion. Liesly promised all, and more than all, which Gottfried had ventured to require. She pledged him her heart,—she pledged him her faith ; and even vowed, should their marriage eventually prove unaccomplishable, to remain single for his sake. And this effort once made, she emulated the example of her lover ; and strove, for her father's sake, to appear as cheerful and contented as ever.

But it might not be !—The recollection of old Abel's half-uttered curse still rang in her ears. Whenever she attempted one of her former gay carols, in mimicry of the peasant girls of the Wallensee, her voice died away in a piteous murmur ; and even the factory children, when she paid them her daily visit at their work,—calling them by name, rewarding the industrious, exhorting the ill-disposed, but most frequently caressing the young, and encouraging the friendless,—noted to each other on her departure that every hour Ma'mselle Elzbeth (Heaven bless her !) grew

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paler, and thinner, and sadder to see. But the prayers of many an humble fireside rose to the tribunal of Grace, for her sake ; and many a matron whom she had comforted in sickness or in sorrow, interceded with Heaven that she who forgot not the poor, might not in her turn be forgotten. Nay, the very chafferers in Catholic piety, when they passed through St. Gall on their annual pilgrimages to the neighbouring shrine of our Lady of Einsiedln, laden with commissions from the Papists of the remoter cantons, were charged with more than one earnest delegation to the holy patroness, from the more bigoted pensioners and *protégés* of the gentle and afflicted Elzbeth Brenzel.

Nor was it alone the poor and lowly who interested themselves in the unpropitious aspect of her affairs. Liesly was a universal favourite ; and Dietrich was not the man to conceal within his own bosom the wrongs his child had sustained at the hands of his obdurate partner. Having no longer the heart to indulge in his usual witless jests, he filled up the measure of his daily discourse with murmurs against Morier's pride, and Morier's ambition, and Morier's ridiculous pretensions to the heart of his pretty Elzbeth. He did not want listeners. Old Abel, was a man too prosperous not to have many enemies. Moreover, he was a vehement politician,

an advocate of the people, and an ardent defender of the ancient liberties of the republic; and divers mal-contents, who cherished an old-standing grudge against him, among the burghers, suggested that were Gottfried and Elzbeth (according to the usages and laws of the canton) to lay their case before the constituted authorities, representing their competence to maintain a family, and challenging the unreasonable father to oppose any rational obstacle to their union,—the sanction of church and state would be instantly conceded to their wishes.

Certain of the town-councillors, too, who were bitterly jealous of the influence of old Morier among the people, and who suspected his intention of offering himself to their suffrages at the ensuing election as representative of the canton at the Helvetic Diet, went even so far as to volunteer their aid and votes to Dietrich Brenzel. But Liesly would not hear of recourse to measures so violent. Her heart was young and full of hope. "Let us have patience," said she, "and he who was once so warmly our friend will relent, and confirm our happiness." And her letters to this effect ensured the forbearance of Gottfried; although they did not suffice to restore the bloom to her own cheek, or the elasticity to her step, or the spirit to her accents. Every one in St. Gall pitied her; and the old man, her father, wrung

his hands in utter despondency, while he watched over her failing health.

Meanwhile, a circumstance occurred tending greatly to enhance the sympathy of the St. Gallois. As the epoch of the election drew near, the burgher of Engafeld returned to his usual habitation and usual habits; and the little faction created against him by the advocates of his son, had so ill succeeded in estranging the affection of his numerous workmen, or of the influential party formed in his favour by his long-established character for wisdom, honesty of purpose, and independence of character, that the returning officer at the public ballot declared Abel Morier elected, by an unprecedented majority, deputy of the canton of St. Gall!—

Even Dietrich Brenzel could not but rejoice in this triumph of his partner! Abel's life had been a continued course of industry, frugality, temperance, equity, benevolence, and piety; and setting aside his recent conduct towards his son, Dietrich felt deeply conscious that, as a man, a citizen, and a christian, the father of Gottfried deserved well of his country.

Liesly, too, was well content that the interests of her native province should be consigned to the hand of so trustworthy a senator; more particularly, when it occurred to her that Gottfried, who had now for six months past been settled in a

house of business at Geneva, might profit by his father's absence from St. Gall to snatch a glimpse of home, and of those who rendered home so dear ; and, finally, with old Brenzel's sanction, it was decided between them that on the day following the departure of the new deputy for Berne, where the Diet was about to assemble, the deputy's son should become their guest.

It was not, however, settled between *them*, but between Dietrich and his friends the Privy Councillors of the Burgh, that, during Gottfried's visit, the long-suggested appeal should be laid before the civil authorities of St. Gall ; who, smarting with the mortification of Morier's recent triumph and humiliated by the spectacle of the new Deputy's departure in his new equipage to fulfil his new duties, were predisposed to seize upon an occasion of thwarting his wishes, and wounding his pride. The town-council having maturely deliberated, therefore, upon the joint memorial of Dietrich Brenzel and his intended son-in-law, and decided that no just cause or impediment existed to the proposed marriage, hesitated not to affix the great seal of St. Gall to the wedding contract ; whereby, in virtue of the by-laws of the Province, the dissent of parents was rendered nugatory.

And now, in spite of the misgivings of poor Elzbeth, whose hesitation formed the only remain-

ing obstacle to the match, the nuptial ceremony was appointed for solemnization in the cathedral of St. Gall; while, as a pretended testimony of respect towards their honoured representative, the authorities judged it necessary to acquaint the *Sieur Morier* with the insulting interference they had exercised, during his absence in the legislation of his family affairs. A long flourishing letter was accordingly concocted in council, and engrossed by the Town-Clerk, and officially despatched to the address of the *Burgher of St. Gall*, in the city of many bears.

The day appointed for the opening of the Diet was a bright summer day—the anniversary of *Gottfried's* luckless arrival at Engafeld. But, for the first time since that untoward event, *Abel's* mind dwelt neither upon his son nor his vexations. The great event of his life was on the eve of consummation—the great reward of his exertions was conceded to him—he was about to take his place among the elect of the Republic, as the delegated guardian of the liberties of his native country. A mighty duty was in his hand; and as he rose and blessed God at his morning sacrifice of prayer, for preserving him to enjoy the light of another day, he humbly sued for added grace and the inspiration of wisdom from on high, to enable him diligently to fulfil the great charge committed to his watchfulness.

Already the bells were ringing loudly from the various steeples of the city, to announce the coming ceremony; and the drums rolling, and the colours of the Republic fluttering, at the various gates and outposts!

As the Deputy of St. Gall approached the towering platform on which the Cathedral is situated, the gaudy-suited officials of the city, in their mantles of crimson and yellow, stood uncovered as he passed; and the sentinels presented arms, while a roll of drums announced to the congregation within that a senator was at hand. And Morier took his seat at his appointed place, for the divine service destined to precede the opening of the Diet, with a secret sensation of pride; more vain-glorious, perhaps, than became a creature of clay, in the sanctified Temple of the Lord.

But no sooner did the anthem of praise echo through the vaulted aisles of the ancient cathedral—no sooner did the peeling notes of the organ send forth their inspiring Hallelujahs, than the old man's soul was touched anew with the spirit of holiness; and when the solitary voice of the preacher succeeded the hymn—the still, small voice of a faithful minister of Christ, insisting upon the greatest and most admirable of Christian precepts—the common brotherhood of mankind, illustrated in the peremptory claims

possessed by the poorest herdsman of Helvetia, upon the consideration and protection of its Senate,—Abel Morier leaned his head upon his hand, giving himself up to contemplation of the vastness of his duties as a maker of the law,—whether as regarded the living multitudes of his countrymen, or their countless posterity to come. His soul became elevated by the glow of patriotism. For the first time, he seemed to stand in the presence of the Most high, as a doubly accountable being.

Again the anthem sounded, as if to perfect his vision of beatification. And when the concluding benediction was given, he walked forth with dignity into the summer sunshine in his appointed place in the procession ; when just as the twenty-two deputies of the cantons were passing under the shade of the huge, venerable trees, by which the cathedral is surrounded, (on their way to the lower church, in which are held the sittings of the Diets,) that the messenger, respectfully approaching his honoured representative, rendered to him the ill-omened despatch of the Town Council of St. Gall.

The effects of the intelligence thus imparted, will be best inferred from the following letter, which was placed in the hands of Gottfried Morier on the following morning, as he issued forth from the bridal chamber of his happiness.—The cha-

racters were traced with an unsteady hand, but they proved only too legible in the eyes of the unhappy husband !

“ IT IS DONE, THEN ! The crime is accomplished which it has been the sole object of my latter years to circumvent ; and deeply as I have offended, grievously as I have sinned, my punishment is at length commensurate with my offence ! I have been upbraided with pride ; the voice of my fellow-citizens accuses me of ambition.—Alas ! to what has my elevation tended ?—Only that the grey head, which my efforts have raised above the crowd, may be the more plainly discerned—defiled by the ashes of shame !—Gottfried,—my son—my unhappy son—listen to the last words of a heart-broken and dying man.

“ Yes ! I *was* proud !—Satan has been permitted to place that fatal snare before my faltering footsteps :—*not* pride of lineage,—for my father was a man of the people, a mechanic, the son of mechanics ; and the consciousness of this inferiority of birth, joined with my unhappy propensity of mind, seemed only to stimulate me to a more arduous quest of distinction. And so far Heaven furthered my views. No sooner had I become an orphan, than I resolved to complete my education in a country more advanced in civilization than my native canton. I travelled on foot to England ; bound myself in weary appren-

ticeship in one of her most prospering manufacturing districts; perfected myself as a master weaver, and acquired such an insight into the mysteries of loom-machinery, as raised me, shortly after my return to St. Gall, to the condition of foreman of its chief manufactory; and successively to that of overseer, and working partner in the establishment.

“ My career of industry was unobstructed by a single obstacle. Everything prospered with me; or, perhaps, the force of my ardent desire for advancement, enabled me to surmount those difficulties which form serious obstacles to other men. My worthy partner conceded his love and esteem so warmly to my unexampled diligence in business, that at length his only daughter, your mother, learned to love and esteem me in her turn; nor was the temptation, afforded by her handsome dowry and high expectations, to be resisted by a man of my calculating and aspiring character.

“ We married, and this was my first great fault—for I did not love Margaret with the degree of love indispensable to cement the happiness of wedded life. I took her as a stepping-stone to preferment; not as the reward of my past labours, or the companion to whom I purposed to devote the tenderness of my heart of hearts. Yet she was a good woman, a good wife; al-

though of somewhat too thrifty a turn for the gentler sympathies and tendencies of her sex. Accustomed from early youth to consider only the prosperity of the factory, she had not an idea distinct from its routine of business; could talk of nothing but the price of wages, the variations of the cotton-markets, the thriving or adversity of such and such a correspondent, the idleness of such and such a workman;—she appeared to be as much a piece of machinery as any it contained!

“ Never could I get her to converse with me on general topics, never to go forth for recreation into the fields, never to interest herself in the political destinies of her native country. So long as the manufactory went right, the Republic could not go wrong! Even your birth, my son, formed rather an additional claim upon her activity, than an augmentation of her domestic happiness; she was too busy administering to your future fortunes, to have leisure to bestow upon the care of your infancy! Yet, Heaven knows, there was no cause for this engrossing thrift; her father having expired shortly after our marriage, leaving Abel Morier and his wife joint proprietors of the factory of St. Gall.

“ It was about this time that the events of the French revolution brought war and the desolation of war, to the manufacturing districts of the

Rhine; and Margaret (Heaven forgive her!) congratulated me that the destruction of the looms of Muhlhausen, would yield increase of custom and profit to our own. But many Swiss families naturalized in the Rhenish provinces, were driven forth to ruin by these disasters; and among others who sought a refuge at St. Gall from their unmerited misfortunes, were Brenzel and his family.

“ Dietrich was a man of about my own age, his wife was ten years younger than mine; and when they knocked at our gate, seeking employment, Madame Brenzel was so spent with fatigue, terror, privation, and sufferings,—so pale, so delicate, and apparently so near her end,—that even Margaret was touched to the heart, and insisted upon affording permanent hospitality to the strangers. For *her* curse and mine they became our inmates! Dietrich, indeed, though destitute of worldly means, was fully capable of repaying the charity thus bestowed; for he was an able workman, and rejoiced in an opportunity of requiting my good offices with the disclosure of certain processes peculiar to the far-famed manufactures of Muhlhausen, and hitherto unpractised in St. Gall.

“ But of Liesly, his wife—*his*!—in what terms shall I speak! Judge not of her beauty, my son, by that of her daughter; for with half the perso-

nal loveliness of our unhappy Elzbeth, she possessed fifty-fold her attractions. Young as she was, Madame Brenzel had already experienced a thousand sad vicissitudes. Her parents, unfortunate in trade, had forced her into an uncongenial marriage; and the rude, boisterous nature of Brenzel, and the coarseness of his mind, repelled all hope of sympathy between them. Her health was feeble, her nature timid; and she had recently witnessed the massacre of her father, the burning of her dwelling-place, and been driven forth a wanderer, with the dread of still more fearful outrages to aggravate her affliction.

“ Judge, therefore, of her contentment in being welcomed to a tranquil home; judge of her gratitude to Margaret and to me. Her strength gradually returned, in an abode of peace and abundance. The gravity of my disposition, and reserve of my manners, soon inspired her with confidence in her husband’s patron; while to *you*, my son, you who had hitherto been a neglected child, she devoted all the cares of womanly tenderness.

“ ‘ I shall be but a poor help to you in matters of business or housewifery,’ she would say to her bustling benefactress. ‘ Accept, at least, my services as a nurse to little Gottfried.’ And Margaret would pat her compassionately on the shoulder in reply; and call her a poor frail, helpless thing; and bid her not spoil the boy by

over-fosterhood. You were, nevertheless, always in her arms ; and so fair and happy did the two appear together, that I took too great a joy in beholding you thus united.

“ Dwelling thus in happy companionship, it was not very long before I discovered the peril by which I was menaced ; and I was only apprehensive lest Liesly should become similarly enlightened. For the first time, alas ! I experienced the intoxicating influence of human passion—for the first time trembled under the overwhelming emotions of love ; and though I durst not yet inquire of myself whether it were possible for that fair and tender creature to love me in return, it was happiness enough to believe that I was the first person in whom she had found a kind and congenial companion, and that my calm, yet enthusiastic character, was far more closely assimilated with her own than the boisterous buffoonery of Dietrich.

“ Nevertheless, my son, I was still a God-fearing man ; and no sooner did I recognise the temptation before me as too powerful for my means of resistance, than I laboured to strengthen my weakness with pious studies, and with added diligence in my vocation. I devoted more time to the manufactory—I compelled myself to listen to Margaret’s tedious details, and to laugh at Dietrich’s paltry jests. But what availed all

this?—Still, when the labours of the day were done, I found Liesly seated by my fireside with my boy upon her knee; her gentle voice, her mild demeanour, her bright intelligence of soul, affording me a delicious recompense for my past self-denial, and new dangers to be surmounted for the future. I *could* not shut her out from my eyes—I *could* not close my ears against her balmy accents. If I fled from home to avoid her, my wife reproached me with neglect. No! I could only remain, and drink in sights and sounds of love; which excited my senses to distraction—and eventually plunged me into the darkest delusions of sin!

“ But a greater ordeal still remained. Poor Liesly, perceiving how rigorously I avoided her, and how harshly I frequently replied to her friendly demonstrations, began to fancy that I was weary of my dependent guests. Again the bloom of health forsook her cheek—she could scarcely look at me without tears,—she could scarcely bring herself to address me, for very misery.

“ And then it was, my son, that I discovered how fatally precious was my friendship in her sight. She loved me almost as much as I loved *her*: and with mutual sentiments of such a nature, and a mutual position of such painful delicacy, a mutual understanding was inevitable. I scarcely remember how it was that we were

first moved to a mutual confession of our attachment—our wretchedness; but both were alike conscious of the sinfulness of the avowal, and alike resolute to struggle against the weakness of our hearts. That we could ever submit ourselves to a greater crime, entered not into the minds of either. Upheld by mutual esteem, we mistrusted not ourselves, or each other; and became guilty, my son, miserably and fearfully guilty, while still cheering each other on in the career of virtue.

“ From that epoch of desolation, Gottfried, cheerfulness forsook our dwelling.—Liesly reviled herself as the most ungrateful of women; while the consciousness of outraged hospitality weighed heavily upon the soul of her seducer. The perfect confidence which Brenzel and Margaret maintained towards us, seemed only to brand us with deeper hypocrisy. *We*, who were affecting to fulfil our duties as Christians, as citizens, as husband and as wife, could any one venture to mistrust us, as defiled with the pollution of adultery? I still took my station at church, among the elders of the people; Liesly still knelt in pious holiness among the unspotted matrons of the city; what evidence, what *hint* did we afford of being united together by the damning ties of illicit love!—

“ Meanwhile it was rumoured in due time in

our household, that Madame Brenzel was likely to become a mother; and from the hour of receiving that fatal intelligence, I never again beheld a smile upon the countenance of Liesly. Her wan face was a sufficient accusation against us both; and when, beside our evening hearth, Dietrich thought fit to rally her with ill-timed jests on her dejection, or Margaret attempted to cheer her spirits with the counsels of a matron's experience, Liesly replied to their exhortations only by repeated bursts of tears.

"Yet *I* sat by in silence, nor dared approach her with a single word of consolation; and it was remarked that now, for the first time since Brenzel's arrival at St. Gall, I began seriously to busy myself with the concerns of the manufactory, and the public business of the burgh. Margaret loudly congratulated herself that her husband was at last beginning to take upon himself, as he ought, and exhibit due sensibility to the interests of his wife and son. But, in point of fact, I sought only to avoid the woful spectacle of Liesly's despondency; who, as her term approached, (with the exception of her daily attendance at the cathedral,) rarely quitted the house.

"Her eyes were often red with weeping; her voice was ever hoarse with the struggle of inward emotion. She took no heed of her increasing weakness; and once, when I accidentally over-

took her, in the dusk of evening, on her return from vesper service, 'Liesly,' I ventured to whisper, 'for the sake of the unborn, be more careful of your health. For the sake of the precious unborn, give not yourself over to despondency!'

" 'For the sake of the unborn,' she meekly replied,—and the dew rose upon my forehead, as I marked the hollowness of her voice—'it were meet that I should go down into the grave, ere it beheld the light!'

" 'Not so,' I exclaimed. 'The Lord our God is a God of mercy; and, for the sake of an innocent child, will be moved to pardon the contrite parents.'

" 'The Lord our God is a jealous God!' said Liesly solemnly. 'It is written that he will visit the sins of the fathers upon the children; and, should this little one be spared, mark me, if its sufferings be not made an atonement for the crime of one who bare an alien child to a kind and trusting husband. Abel,—it is this thought which is destroying me. Yet a little while, and my probation of penitence will be over, and my weariness at rest. But the child! promise me—oh! promise me—that should it survive, you will watch over its welfare with more than a mother's vigilance?'

" 'I will, I will!' cried I, not even daring to

take her hand; not even daring to fix my eyes upon her piteous looks. 'Be but merciful to yourself, Liesly; and you have no need to mistrust the mercy of others, or the forgiveness of the Almighty.'

"And, lo! the appointed day of trial came; and I knew at an early hour that the pangs were upon her. Yet I quitted not for an instant the factory, lest, peradventure, my courage might fail, and I should betray all. I did not say to Dietrich Brenzel, 'Go! quit your duties for this day, and comfort the sufferer;' for I could not bear that he should be near her at such a moment; but at length there came a messenger from Margaret, in haste, to bespeak his presence. I had not breath to ask if all were well;—and soon after, behold! there came a second messenger, with heavy steps and downcast face—and *him* there was no need to question; for look and gesture told that all was over—that the sufferer was at rest.

"I know not, Gottfried, what became of me, *then*;—the first thing I recollect was Margaret's voice, bidding me come in, and see how peaceful and how lovely was our departed friend in death. But I could not comply. I went forth, and wandered about the fields till nightfall; and then, on my return, crept up into the silent chamber of Liesly, where no one lingered now but the hire-

ling watchers, with their solitary death-light. And there lay the cold, narrow, sorrow-wasted form, beneath the folded sheet, with the long, fair tresses extended over either arm.—The moan of pain was hushed ; the tears of bitterness were wiped away ; nothing was left but the smile on the marble lips—the dew on the tranquil brow—and the holy halo of immortalized humanity. I ventured not even to imprint a parting kiss upon the face I loved. Our last had been a kiss of sin. I would not blight the purity of her resurrection with the stain of remorse.

“ Margaret it was who, with gentle persuasions, led me away from the dead ; she was eager to place the infant of her friend in my arms, and claim for it a father’s protection. Poor trusting Margaret !—how little did she dream what agony was inflicted by every word she uttered !—But I *did* take the babe to my bosom ; I *did* swear to provide for it as my own ; and Dietrich sat by, weeping in all the helplessness of grief. While you, Gottfried, you *alone*, my son, unconscious of the calamity which had befallen, kept bestowing unnumbered welcomes on your new companion—‘ Your own pretty little Liesly !’

“ I had still one awful duty to discharge. The bitter task was mine to support her husband’s faltering steps, when, on the following day, we proceeded to lay her head in the grave ; and

loved as she was by all, and respected as were those of whom she died the inmate, hundreds of the townspeople of St. Gall joined in the sad procession.

“The white emblems that proclaimed her death in child-birth—so young, so fair, so gentle—appeared to touch the hearts of the very rabble with compassion; and, lo! when the service began, with my eyes fixed upon the coffin that contained her remains, I heard the tender chant of the young choristers proclaim that, ‘When the ear heard her, then it blessed her,’ and the voice of the preacher declare that, ‘Happy were they, who died, like her, in the Lord!’—But I knew that her spirit was standing at the tribunal of God, stained with the plague-spot of sin; and as the author of this great wickedness, I trembled, rebuked by judgment to come.

“Oh! Gottfried, Gottfried!—little dreamed I how soon, how heavily, that judgment would overtake me! Little dreamed I, when day after day I entered your chamber of childhood, and you flew to lead me to the cradle and uncover to my kisses the brow of the babe, and point out to me how fair she was, and how like to the mamma Liesly, who was dead and gone,—that, in *your* person, the curse would be accomplished.

“My poor wife won strangely upon my feelings in those early days of bereavement. Her tears

for the departed were so tender and true, and her devotedness to the motherless babe so touching, that I became at last fully conscious of her excellence. To yourself, I had thought her a cold and careless parent,—to little Liesly she was all goodness and consideration. But she survived not longer than to train the poor innocent in the earliest paths of childhood. The spectacle of Madame Brenzel's untimely end had shaken her health. Our house was now cheerless; nor had I the heart to devote to her those attentions which she so much needed.

“ Within a few years of the great event, she died, leaving me doubly desolate; and with her last breath, she recommended me ‘our girl,’ with no less love and fervour than our boy, and entreated as a parting request, that her remains might be laid by those of Liesly. But in this, as no one but myself had heard the petition, I ventured to frustrate her wishes. I felt that compliance would have been a new injury—that I had no right to mingle the tears I shed for the woman I had loved, with those due to the memory of the wife I respected. A space of many tombs separates their places of sepulture; and when I go hence, my beloved son, lay me not, oh! lay me not where they lie!—

“ And now, Gottfried, I was left alone with my

motherless children; and dearly did I love ye both, and fervently did I pray that in *your* virtues the errors of your father might be redeemed. You were ever hand in hand—heart in heart; when, one day, half earnest, half bantering, Dietrich, who remained by necessity my constant companion, was pleased to designate Elzbeth by the name of your little wife.

“A thousand perils were revealed to me in the word! Often, unable to bear the weight of my burthen of hypocrisy, when I saw him lavishing his caresses on Liesly, and Liesly bestowing her’s in return, I longed to divulge the truth to him and claim my own. But pride overcame the promptings of my heart. I dreaded lest, in his indignation, he should rush forth into the city and proclaim me an arch impostor, and cry aloud, Such and such is the man whom you honour with your reverence. One only means, therefore, remained to prevent the possibility of further evil. Liesly was a tender girl—I had pledged myself to my victim to watch over her with more than a mother’s reverence; and to estrange *her* from the security of my roof-tree was impossible. It was *your* fate, therefore, to be exiled from home in retribution of your father’s offences—and such, Gottfried, was the motive of your alienation from your sister’s side.

“ But the fatal sentence was recorded ! *Both* were to suffer ; and all my efforts to keep you asunder have failed to frustrate the vengeance of God. You came to Engafeld ; you saw and loved her ; and even then, but for the promptings of my pride, I should have pointed out the precipice you were approaching. But the dread of disclosure—of betrayal—of forfeiting the esteem and applause of the world, overcame the better suggestions of nature. Forgive me, my son—forgive me!—I have rendered you more miserable, if less guilty, than myself. I have broken my word to *her*—to those I love. The reflection maddens me ! Adultery—incest—a broken vow—a broken heart. Oh, mighty God ! for what am I not accountable !—Give me strength to bear with this new trial ; or the struggle of my despair must seek refuge in the dark abyss of eternity.

“ I rave, Gottfried ; but can you marvel at my distraction ?—That I could but see you once more before I die ! That I could but hear you pronounce my pardon !—Yet, wherefore did you disobey my injunctions ? Said I not—*sware* I not—that there existed an all-powerful obstacle to your marriage ?—And you attributed all to pride, to avarice, to an old man’s wanton coveting ! Oh, shame, shame, shame !

“ Farewell, then, my children—my miserable children!—The peace and pardon of God be with you!”

Inferring from the incoherence of these last sentences, some new calamity, Gottfried, whom the fatal intelligence conveyed by the earlier pages of his father's letter had stricken to the dust, strove to regain sufficient mastery over his feelings to enable him to reach Berne, and pacify the agony of his guilty parent. But he arrived too late. A livid corse had already been withdrawn from the waters of the Reuss, which the officials of the city recognised as the body of the respected representative of St. Gall.

His disastrous end was, of course, carefully attributed to accident, lest the dignity of the senatorial estate should be infringed by the admission of an act of suicide; and his remains were interred in the Cathedral with military and civil honours. In due time a handsome monument was erected to his memory, as a member of the Helvetic Senate, a friend of the people, and a defender of the national liberties of the Canton. It was owing perhaps to accident that nothing was added in testimony to his virtues as a husband and a father.

The unhappy Gottfried returned no more to St. Gall; and Liesly, ignorant to the last of the

horrible truth, attributed his estrangement to remorse for having caused by his disobedience the dreadful catastrophe of his father's death. Having accepted a commission in the French army, he fell in the attack upon Algiers.

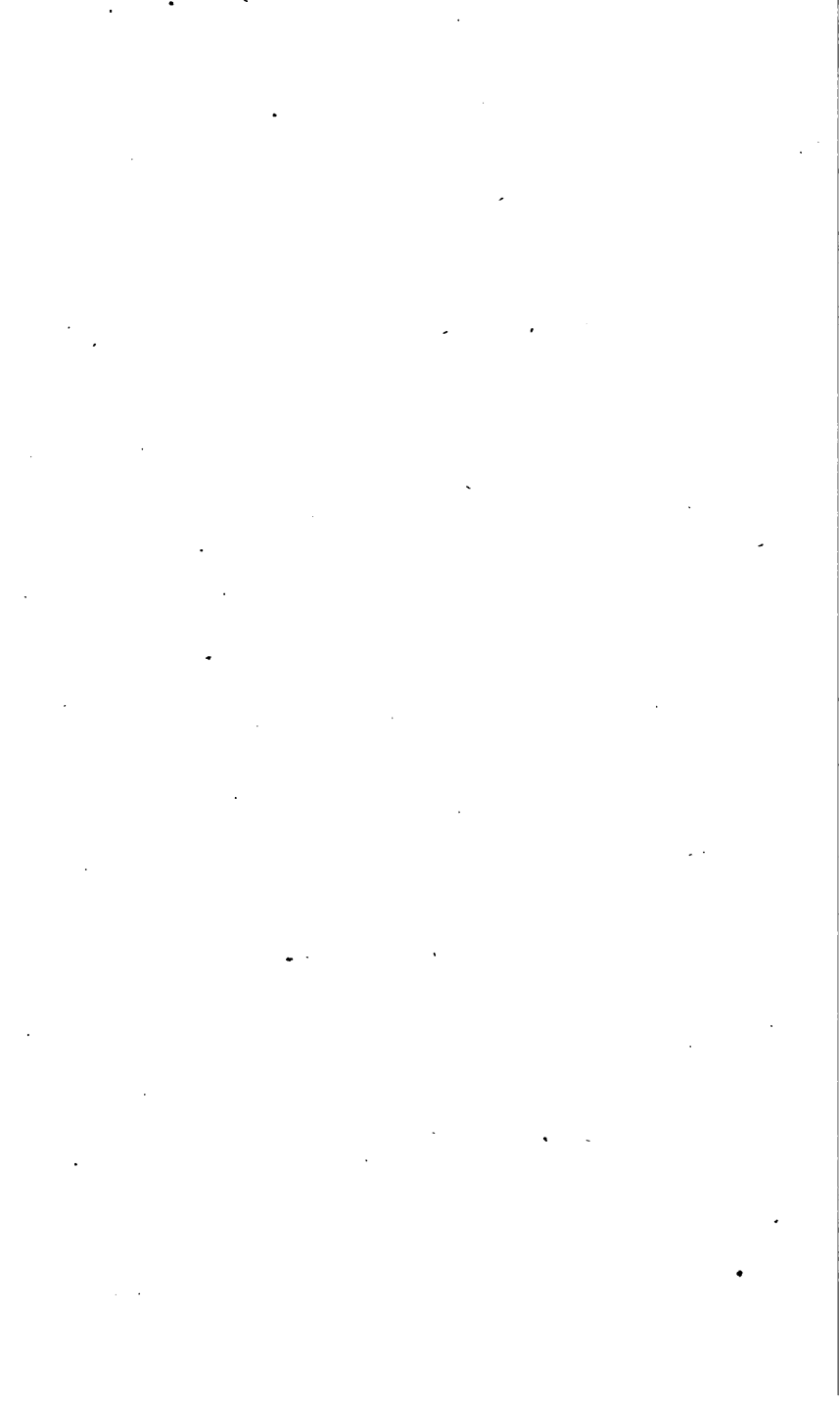
The English traveller, therefore, who pauses at St. Gall to admire the fabric of its delicate organdy, and the creamy tissues of its Swiss muslin, is duly informed by the foreman of the establishment that the factory is the property of the Widow Morier; and should he subsequently become a wanderer on the shores of the Wallensee, there is every chance that he will behold, seated on the granite steps of the landing-place at Engafeld, the slender figure of one who seems to be looking out upon the lake, in expectation of some distant boat.

But it is Gottfried's coming which the bewildered soul of Liesly expects, and will long expect in vain. She has refused to attire herself in mourning; she has refused to give ear to the tidings of his death. But, at five-and-twenty, her hair is white as snow with watchfulness and grief; and no man passes her by, without a suppressed exclamation of pity.

The young marksmen of the canton, in deference to her sorrows, have removed their place of rendez-vous for the annual *Tirage* from the

adjacent meadow; it having been noticed that the discharge of the rifles, or the sound of distant music, excites her to frenzy. For Liesly is now alone in the world. Father, brother, friend are gone!—and hard indeed must be the heart that entertains not a sensation of sympathy for the terrible destinies of the sister-wife—the blameless victim—the gentle widow of Engafeld.

THE SCRAP-STALL.



THE SCRAP-STALL.

" Oh ! wholesale dealers in Waste, Want, and War,
Would that your crimes were written—and they are."

Ebenezer Elliot.

THE spectacle of human misery is, at all times, painful and humiliating; but local contrasts are not without effect in diminishing or aggravating its influence on the compassionate. A hamlet of hovels, for instance, lying on the outskirts of a sandy heath or Irish bog, looks as if Nature's self were at enmity with the land and its inhabitants; and a German village, some relic of feudal barbarism, knee-deep in mud, and mud-deep in ignorance, seems as fitly appropriated to its bare-footed boors, as the squalid suburb of an English manufacturing town to its worn, sallow, ill-grown, unshorn population. Our hearts are, for a moment, wrung as we pass the cheerless refuge of these Paria tribes of Christendom; but, right, or wrong,

we accustom ourselves to regard such wretchedness as a species of providential condemnation; persuaded that we can do nothing to alleviate misfortune on so vast a scale—misfortune apparently linked with the moral order or disorder of the universe.

But there are times and places when the sores of Lazarus, though doubly loathsome to the eye, seem to possess a sort of fascination for the soul; when we stand, and gaze, and shudder, and turn away, and gaze again with our hearts heavy within us, and the tears congealed in our eyes; such as the cottage in some fertile country, hard by the park where mottled deer are seen basking in the sun, and the lordly hall of freestone looks protectingly over the landscape,—a cottage whence the broken-hearted labourer is ejected whose one poor field has failed in yielding its annual rent-paying crop—his goods seized—his wife and babes driven forth to hunger by the way; while the minions of the law pounced on his hard pallet—his wicker chair—his broken crockery—his tattered Bible—as greedily as on the emblazoned goblets and silken hangings of some aristocratic defaulter. Or such as the object of our present contemplation,—the *Scrap Stall* of the *Marché St. Honoré*.

Everybody knows that there exists in the immediate neighbourhood of the palace of the Tuileries, a quarter called by most people, the

Quartier Rivoli, (by many, the *Quartier Anglais*, from being the resort of all wealthy English travellers visiting Paris) the buildings of which are the handsomest, most lofty, and most regular of the whole city; and like the majority of its modern improvements, the creation of that very despotic Reformer—Napoleon Bonaparte. It is difficult, indeed, to fancy a more charming residence than the Rue de Rivoli. Overlooking the massive chesnut-groves of the gardens of the Tuileries, with their avenues of orange-trees crowded with gay and gaudy loungers, having, on the basement story, a noble arcade to shelter pedestrians from all changes of weather, lined by brilliant shops and tempting *cafés*—these mansions present a vast *façade* of regular frontage; forming a splendid object from the windows of that palace from which, during the last forty years, such a variety of sovereigns have looked down upon their motley and most ungovernable, because most governable subjects.

From this noble street branch off several equally inviting; such as the Rue Castiglione—another monument of Bonapartian triumph—looking towards the Place Vendôme, and its memorable column; and the Rue du 29 Juillet—a monument to the triumph of the Three Days—looking towards the Marché St. Honoré, *and its Scrap-Stall*. The column and the fame of Napoleon have

formed, and form, the theme of poets, preachers, and philosophers ; the *Marché St. Honoré* belongs to ourselves.

That market obtains in the mouths of the people, another designation. It is called the *Marché des Jacobins*—a name fraught with thrilling associations—and occupies the site of the gardens of that very convent, where assembled the Jacobin club, the cradle of the Revolution,—the Areopagus of Mirabeau and Marat, Robespierre and Danton—those moral Frankensteins, who manufactured a monster, while seeking to organise a divinity !

As if to atone for the human blood sprinkled in libation to the infernal gods on its desecrated earth, Napoleon devoted the spot—when “human statutes” had purged once more “the general weal”—to the useful purposes of life and better service of the people, by constructing there an airy and commodious market ; and, although it has been rendered once again the arena of fruitless butchery, by the barricades erected to expel Charles X., the market still remains, to supply the daintiest fish, flesh, and fowl, for the Dives of the *Quartier Rivoli*.

There dwells the *Verdurier du Roi*, with his luscious exhibition of pine-apples and pomegranates ; his musky truffles from Perigueux, during the winter season ;—his emerald-tipped asparagus,

and tiny baskets of strawberries, during the early spring : his peaches from Montreuil, and *chasse-las* from Fontainebleau, during the summer and autumn. There hangs the fat capon or *poularde* from Le Mans ; the plump ortolan or beccafico, from the south ; the slender *chevreuil* ; the early lamb, with its snowy fur ; the aristocratic pheasant, in his golden plumage ; the homely guinea-fowl ; the red-legged partridge. Hard by, piles of crayfish—baskets of oysters, from Cancale or Ostend — the spotted trout — the silver smelt — the shapely salmon — the mottled mackarel — the opaque turbot, flat and heavy as a conservative member—the sharp-nosed pike, preserving, even on its leaden tray, the lean and hungry look of a place-hunter. Of grosser viands, we sing not ; Homer might have described, though we shall *not*, stalls of fat beeves—veal from Pontoise, and mutton from the salt marshes. We shall not even touch upon the heaps of snowy cauliflowers, white and compact as a bishop's wig, amethystine brocoli, green pease, like globules of chrysophrase, melons plenty as pumpkins, pumpkins large enough for Cinderella's coach ; faggots of chardoons ; cartloads of artichokes ; *pommes d'apis*, Crezanne pears, the counterfeits of reigning royalty, medlars, mushrooms, and other of its appropriate appendages.

For the Market of the Jacobins, be it observed, situated in one of the most thriving and wealthy quarters of the city, surrounded by palaces, hotels, and coffee houses, addresses itself especially to the factitious wants of the rich. There, early in the morning, may be seen the white night-caps ministering to the epicurism of all the opulent upstarts of the Place Vendôme; the *maitres d'hôtel* of princes and ministers; and, above all, of the *restaurateurs* whose vocation it is to tickle the satiated palate of your travelled English lord—the Udes of the Café de Paris—the Carêmes of the Hôtel de Bristol and Meurice. The fattest of poultry, the freshest of fish, the earliest and latest of fruit, are sure to be found there. *There* they are pre-assured of purchasers. *There* jingles the golden Napoleon, or clanks the heavy five-franc piece! In the *Marché des Innocens*, (commonly called *Les Halles*,) in the markets St. Eustache, St. Joseph, d'Aguesseau, and others, brown money prevails; and you hear wrangling for a *liard*, and see fighting for a *gros sol*. But in the *Marché St. Honoré*, every bargain is politely carried on. The knight of the carving-knife bows, while he insinuates to the fishwife that her lobster is pale of complexion, and stinketh in the nostrils; and not so much as a pennyworth of lentils is measured out with an ungracious hand. There is no trace

of Billingsgate or Covent Garden; the Marché St. Honoré is of the court, courtly;—and yet it contains the *Scrap Stall*!

We do not affect fastidiousness. Others may turn daintily aside, when the dog's-meat man and his barrow approach some obscure alley. But we, professing with the philosopher Wordsworth, that the great Master of all—

Maintains a deep and reverential care,
For the unoffending creatures whom he loves,

rejoice to behold the confidence testified by the domestic animals committed to the charge of mankind, in the tenderness of their keepers;—the prick-eared excitement of the capering cur—the purring joy of grimalkin, on scenting her approaching dinner. We can look at the barrow without disgust—for it contains dog's-meat prepared for dogs;—but we cannot look without loathing at the Scrap Stall—for it contains dog's-meat prepared for christians!

The Market of the Jacobins has been described as situated in the midst of fashionable coffee-houses and opulent abodes; and it is from these that the broken meat is collected which furnishes the booth in question. Fragments of the whitest bread — a hotch-potch of morsels of truffled turkies — rich ragoûts — salmis which twelve

pheasants have been pounded to compose,—united with half-picked bones—strings and rags of gravy meats—game half-decomposed—drumsticks of ganders,—or the rank and fishy remnants of a wild duck, or teal—the scum of the greasy pot—the crumbling crust of the mouldy *pâté*—the refuse leaf of rank bacon, which once screened the tender breast of a roasted quail—the mould of sour paste, which formerly covered the fat of a saddle of *Pré salé* mutton!—

“Take physic, Pomp!”—Hold not thy nose as thou redest!—*These* constitute but the finer elements of the feast. *These* have again a refuse of their own. *These*, set forth on a wooden platter, with a knife and fork of *métal d’Alger*, are for the Seftons and Warrenders of the poor. *Their* leavings are again made up to furnish forth the Scrap Stall, and feed the ragged mendicant who crawls there, farthing in hand, in the dusk of the evening;—for the infirm—the aged—the friendless—the orphan—the widow—and, worst of all, for the needy of better birth, who cannot dig and to beg are ashamed.

There was a time—and the custom, we suspect, was one of the few regrettable observances of the feudal era—when the poor had a sort of prescriptive right to the crumbs that fell from the rich man’s table: pilgrims and wayfarers, the feeble and the old, were fed, by daily custom, at

the gates of religious and noble houses, with the fragments of the feast devoured within. If the *très hauts et très puissants Seigneurs*, of seigneurial times, looked upon the poor as upon the beasts that perish, at least they threw them a bone or two in compensation ; instead of saying, as now : “ My cook is one of the greatest rogues and first artists in Europe ; God forbid that I should interfere with the fellow’s perquisites.” For how should such a man, rolling in his blazoned chariot, from his hotel in the Rue St. Honoré, to pay his court in the throne room of the Tuileries—supported on air cushions or balancing himself with caoutchouc suspenders—become cognizant, as his gay equipage traverses the market, of the very existence of a scrap-stall ?—Were it, indeed, to arrest his eye, he would probably ejaculate, after a purifying pinch of Bolongaro, “ The police should suppress the thing as a nuisance ! What right have they to carry on so filthy a commerce, under the very nose of the most civilised portion of the community ? I shall speak to Thiers, to get the Scrap-Stall suppressed.”—

He knows not—he would not believe, were it asserted to him—that hundreds seek there their daily bread ; that it is a land of Cocaigne to them that perish for lack of food ; that hungry mouths water when they do but think of that olio of gastronomical abominations ; that many a mother,

gazing upon her lean and craving children, lets fall a bitter tear that her young ravens must still lack meat—that she has no longer wherewithal to visit the Scrap-Stall!—No, no, *Monsieur le Duc*, be not too curious in your legislations! Leave to the beggar his luxuries—leave to the poor their consolation. They hunger, they thirst, they toil:—the sweat of their brows is derided by a crown of thistles, where yours is graced with vine leaves or with roses. The sweets of life are not for the helots of your land. Labour and care are their portion, between the swaddling clothes and the shroud. Grudge them not your broken victuals, which they purchase by the miserable coin of their own earning. Banish them not forth—oh! banish them not from the Scrap-Stall! They have “a lean and hungry look,” and the eye of God is upon them. See that He judge not between ye;—see that He demand not a scathing account of the good things which the man clothed in purple and fine linen hath received at his hands!

But we must generalize no longer. We have a story—and our story a hero—that must not be overlooked.

It was on a glowing midsummer evening of last year, that the idleness which is our life's sweet business, directed our wandering course towards the gay gardens of the Tuileries—the murmur of whose cheerful voices might be heard from afar

across the Jacobin Market Place ; and, on reaching the stone fountain forming its centre, we paused to contemplate the glowing pyramids of strawberries, pines, and hautboys ; of raspberries red as the ruby fruits of Aladdin's subterranean garden ; of green figs—of transparent currants—of early apricots ; enticing as the feast spread forth by Eve, in her innocence, for her husband and his angel guest. On a sudden, we were struck by an unsavoury odour—by the sound of harsh disputation ; and, glancing between the thronged fruit-stalls, caught a glimpse of an emporium of broken meat, and recollected our vicinity to the Scrap-Stall. Turning across the *Place* towards the surrounding houses, we immediately stationed ourselves at the window of the neighbouring herborist, as if to gaze upon its heterogeneous adornments—its garlands of fresh ivy-leaves, dried hyssop, camomile flowers, bunches of *chien dent*, horse radish, poppy heads, millet seed ; its fine lively leeches, gold-fishes, birds' nests, marine shells, and stuffed birds ; its split peas, dried violets, marsh mallows, and other elements of diet drink ; but, in reality, to fix our observations upon the adjoining booth. It would have been cruel to approach nearer. We love to play Apemantus at the banquets of the rich ; but would, on no account, run the risk of damping the appetite of the poor.

The motive, however, of our especial coyness on the present occasion, was that we had noticed, advancing from the corner of the Rue de la Corderie, a remarkable looking individual who appeared to be directing his indirect route towards the *Café de la Misère*. It was the wreck of one of the finest of fine forms; displaying, even amid the gauntness of famine, that air of distinction which nature confers in her bounty when she would create a noble of her own. But the stranger's hat was pulled so closely over his eyes, that we could by no means catch a view of his countenance; and the lower part of his face was covered by a beard of a week's growth, leaving to view only two parched lips, scarcely discernible from the sallow visage. Nevertheless, around that mouth lurked a singular expression of mingled good and evil—of tenderness blended with ferocity—of the lion and the lamb.

For some minutes he walked leisurely but uncollectedly, along the line of stalls; as if contemplating the rich display of summer fruits still remaining unsold. Yet ever and anon he returned towards a certain spot, watching to see if any were on the watch, and circling round and round like a hawk on the eve of a stoop, ere he ventured to settle at the Scrap-Stall.

At length, little suspecting that the spectacles, through which we were pretending to examine the

glass-cases of shells and minerals stuck up in the herborist's window, were in truth fixed upon his movements, he made a sort of dart at the stall, whispered a word to the old woman presiding over its unctious compter, seized the bowl of miserable morsels she presented, emptied it into a handkerchief, and throwing down in return a sum, (it were vain to guess how pitiful,) hurried back towards the obscure street from whence he had issued. Scarcely, however, had he reached it, when some sudden idea appeared to strike his mind, probably in repentance of the haste of his bargain; for having groped to the corner of his pocket and discovered some unexpected store, an odd halfpenny or farthing ensconced in its farthest corner, he retraced his steps, unfolded the handkerchief, examined the quality of its revolting contents, demanded the price of a plate of choicer viands set apart from the rest, tendered his last coin, and was so fortunate as to obtain an exchange of commodities.

And now he appeared grown bolder in his vocation, from having obtained a momentary triumph over his pride; for, on returning once more towards the Rue de la Corderie, his steps were no longer hurried, nor his face so studiously concealed. It is true the twilight was growing duskier every moment—*so* dusky, that even

through our spectacles his features were no longer distinguishable.

Something in the air of decayed nobility investing his person, and a sort of self-disdain or disdain of his pitiful position, interested our feelings ; and having thus admitted a sympathy with the sorrows of life wholly at variance with an editorial nature, let us fling aside the magniloquent “ we ” of our ordinary diction, and admit ourself—nor more nor less—a man !

I resolved, then, to follow the stranger compelled to furnish his meals at a scrap-stall ; feeling convinced that the food thus painfully procured was not intended to appease his solitary hunger, but that the daintiness of the after-thought, urging the proud man to return and mend his cheer, avouched that the sacrifice was made to some being dearly loved—some companion—a wife—a darling child—whose delicacy might be revolted by the coarseness of the viands which the haste of shame had made his own. I assured myself, in the first instance, that my purse was in its right place in my pocket, (I knew that my heart was in its right place in my bosom !) and making my stealthy way after the stranger, made up my mind to ascertain the exact place of his abode, and learn as much of his character and habits as might warrant me in becoming his benefactor. It

seemed an act of injury, however, to misdoubt him; his every look and motion gave token of a superior nature struggling with adversity.

To follow him closely enough for my purpose was, however, no easy matter; for, no sooner had he cleared the open area of the market place, and entered the adjoining dark and narrow street, than he stepped on with gigantic strides; and it required my utmost exertions to overtake him as he reached one of those miserable streets, the abode of vice and infamy, crossing from the neighbourhood of the Rue de Richelieu to that of St. Roch, where he turned into a low, filthy gateway and disappeared.

But I was already close upon him. A glazed box, situated on one side of the entrance, and recognisable by the sliding panel in the window as intended to represent a *loge de concierge*, presented itself, to remind me that I needed a pretext for my intrusion.

"I want to speak to the gentleman who has just gone up stairs," said I, confronting the effluvia of leeks, tobacco, and *soupe aux choux* sure to emanate from the porter's lodge of every house of even secondary condition in the French metropolis.

"To Monsieur Jean?"

"Yes, to Monsieur Jean," I replied, glad to have obtained even so much intelligence of my

unknown friend; "on which floor does he lodge?"

"But, if Monsieur is an acquaintance, surely he should know as well as myself!" observed the surly, dirty old woman, evidently disposed to close her window against my interrogations.

"I have not visited him since he lodged here," was my evasive reply.

"Then Monsieur cannot certainly pretend to be his friend, since he has been in the house two years and half a term." And she muttered something about my "friend" not being likely to lodge there much longer, unless his two last terms were speedily accounted for.

"Monsieur Jean lodges, then, still on the fifth floor?" said I, willing to try the hazard of a supposition.

"Does he, indeed!—I am your humble servant!" cried the woman; "I would have you to know that the *cinquième* of my master, Monsieur Courvoisin's house (three comfortable chambers and a kitchen, to say nothing of closets!) was never let to persons of *his* class, or the like of them."

"Of his *class*?" I involuntarily reiterated.

"I mean, to beggars wanting a coat to their back, and a meal to their table," added she; subjoining with great *hauteur*—"No, Sir! if you grope your way up to the *mansarde*," (Goldsmith's

“first floor down the chimney,” thought I, *par parenthèse* !) “taking care not to miss the steps of the ladder in the dark, you may chance to find your *friend*,” (again she laid a malicious emphasis on the word) “gnawing a mouldy crust, and as proud over it as a lord !”

And with a significant jerk, *Madame la portière* closed the window, evidently disdaining further colloquy with the friend of “Monsieur Jean !” I had, therefore, only to follow the stranger up stairs and ladder, with the provoking certainty that, having now got so long the start of me he must, by this time, be engaged in feeding on the provisions of which I had seen him become the purchaser.

The miserable staircase creaked under my footsteps ; and, as not a ray of daylight or candle-light penetrated its foul recesses, it was only by a compound of villainous smells that the filthiness of the place revealed itself. By sad degrees, I climbed the first, second, third, and fourth floors, even to that honourable eminence of the fifth, so ostentatiously advocated by the porteress. There was still a sixth intervening betwixt me and the *mansarde*, nor was it till I had reached the ladder’s foot, that I began to contemplate the hazards that might be connected with my intrusion into the den of one so opprobriously designated by the only person from whom I could obtain intelligence

of *him* or his whereabouts. Whispering to myself, that persons of very suspicious character are seldom to be found lodging for three years together, in a quarter so strictly under the *surveillance* of the police as that in which I found myself, I determined to persevere; and having attained the *mansarde* or loft, boarded off as in all Paris houses out of the sloping of the roof, I peeped through a pane of glass, forming the ventilator in the door of the first of the two rooms composing the apartments; and by the light of a rush-light burning within, beheld my friend, Monsieur Jean, in the act of arranging on a platter scrupulously clean, the most choice morsels of his wretched repast. Ude himself could not have shewn greater fastidiousness in his mode of placing them to the best advantage. A fresh roll, and some salt screwed in a cornet of paper, lay beside the plate.

“The fellow cannot surely be taking all these pains for his own supper?”—was my involuntary notion, as I marked the gleam of satisfaction—of anticipated enjoyment—irradiating his wan, sunken face. “He cannot be playing the Lucullus over his scraps?”

But while I was thus cogitating, the ear of the stranger was startled, probably by the rustling of my coat against the boards of the partition; for flinging over the preparation of his meal the

handkerchief in which it had been transported, and thrusting into his bosom a table-knife with which he had been arranging them, Monsieur Jean turned to the door, impetuously drew aside its rusty bolt, and fiercely demanded, "Who was there?"

"*A friend!*" was my instantaneous reply, the knife not having failed to produce a certain effect upon my feelings.

"I have no friend!—Name yourself!" persisted Monsieur Jean.

"You would not recognize my name," I replied, with as much calmness as I could assume; "and I would willingly prove my pretensions by deeds, not words;—suffer me to enter your room, and hold a few minutes' conversation with you."

"You are a spy of the police!" cried he, adding an injurious invective, and evidently disposed to make me descend the ladder in a mode far more summary than that of my ascent.

"I am no spy, Monsieur Jean," said I, "and I could easily make you ashamed of your mistrust."

Evidently startled at hearing himself addressed by name, he exclaimed,—

"And what, then, is your business here, that you come in this stealthy manner, and at this unseasonable hour?"

“ I followed you home, Sir,” I replied, judging it better to be explicit with an individual holding me on the brink of a six-foot ladder, with a sharp pointed knife concealed in his breast—“ I watched you from the Marché St. Honoré ; I observed the nature of your purchase, and, forming my own conclusions, that—”

But he did not suffer me to conclude. “ You *watched* me—you dogged my steps— you come to pry into the nakedness of my home, and exult over my misery !”—interrupted he with a furious burst of indignation. “ Meddling fool ! I should do but justice on your miserable person, were I to precipitate you headlong from the retreat you have invaded. Know you not that the home of affliction is sacred as the Temple of God ? Away with you !—Be off !—Disappear !—Or, as Heaven is above us, I will spurn you with my foot from hence to the stairfoot, as a lesson to such base, eavesdropping intruders !”

I saw that he was about to suit the action to the word ; and, as neither the man nor his mood were to be argued with, I profited by his exhaustion of breath to *creep* down the ladder with as much alacrity as I could muster, and saw him pursue me from landing to landing, till I attained the second floor, from the window of which, overlooking the entrance he probably assured himself of my exit from the house.

And thus ended my errand, though not my projects!—Harshly as my good intentions had been negatived, I was only more persuaded than before of the necessities of their object, and determined to minister to their alleviation. It was not too late to visit the Scrap-Stall; nor did the sense of degradation urge any motive to myself to shrink from its humiliating vicinage. Ten minutes carried me back to the market-place, already deserted by the venders of fresh provisions. But there was light at the miserable mart of broken victuals; for this was the hour most convenient to the waiters and lackeys, the habitual purveyors of the establishment, for conveying to the booth of La Mère Urs'line, the pilferings and perquisites supplying the elements of her commerce; and when I made my way to her wooden chair of state, there stood waiting around it a circle of *commissionnaires*, errand-boys, and the *garçons* of the *garçons* of the cafés of the Rue de Rivoli; some bearing tureens of gravy meats; some, salad bowls piled with trencher scrapings; some, a china-dish containing choice morsels; and some, pitchers and other uncouth utensils of *grès*, laden with pickings and stealings of a most miscellaneous nature. It resembled a procession of marriage gifts in an English Easter-piece; but the wooden platter supplied

the place of the goblet of gold, and the bride was evidently daughter to the King of the Beggars!

Nor was the booth wholly cleared of its customers. A *gourmet* of the first water—from the silver plate on his breast and glazed hat on his head, evidently a hackney coachman—(cunning rogue!) was culling the *choice* bits of the newly furnished larder; the carcasses of capons and ribs of lamb, freshly purloined from the sideboards of Laiter and Morinot. He was either a favoured friend—the fancy man of *La Mère Urs'line*—or a caitiff deeply studied in the *Code Gourmand*.

“Hark ye, Prosper!”—cried he, to a sallow lad, whom I had often noticed as a sort of deputy's-deputy of a hanger-on to the waiters of Meurice's hotel—“your *chef* at Meurice's is not what he used to be. All last winter I did myself the honour of boarding with *La Mère Urs'line*, instead of frequenting a wholesome *Cuisine bourgeoise* for my *soupe* and *bouilli*, like No. 301, No. 74, and No. 200, my particular cronies. I condescended to come scrap-hunting here to the Jacobins like the driver of a cab or a *coucou*—induced by the capital *morceaux truffés*, it was now and then my fortune to fish up out of yours and Laiter's remnants. But, by the bones of St Magloire! I would as soon have to dine off the whit-

ings' heads and lobster shells of the *Poissonnerie Anglaise* as depend on anything you have furnished for the last three months."

" 'Tis no fault of mine!" cried the lad sullenly; for his basket was just then under the scrutiny of *La Mère Urs'line*. "We have had such wretched low company of lodgers in the hotel this winter—not so much as a minister or a Milor!—The pitiful fellows we have at Meurice's at present, will pick you a fowl to the very drumsticks, and were never known to leave so much as a truffle or cockscomb of the *vol au vent* in the dish, for manners."

"The beggars!" cried *La Mère Urs'line*.—

"Quels dinés,
Quels dinés
Les ministres m'ont donnés !
Oh ! que j'ai fait de bons dinés !"

sang out No. 109;—for such, I perceived, by the silver plate on his blue coat turned up with red, was the familiar designation of my friend, the *fiacre*. "*La Mère Urs'line—la Mère Urs'line ! si c'est l'effet de vot' complaisance—la carte payante !*" And taking from his pockets a long leathern bag, he proceeded to tell over his two-penny pieces—favouring us, during the operation, with another gay *refrain* of Béranger's

"Oui dans ton Empire
Cocagne, on respire—

Mais qui vient détruire
Ce rêve enchanteur ?
Amis, j'en ai honte—
C'est quelqu'un qui monte
Apporter le compte
Du Restaurateur."

A long flourishing cadence concluded his song ; for No. 109 had evidently imbibed more than was good for his reputation as a charioteer, of the red gargle sold under the name of wine at the nearest *cabaret*, before he had done justice to the dainty viands of *La Mère Urs'line*.

" *Après nous, s'il en reste, not' bourgeois!*" was his parting apostrophe to myself, plucking me familiarly by the sleeve, as he staggered away from the compter, evidently mistaking me for a fellow-customer or perhaps a bottle companion ; and the attention of *La Mère Urs'line* thus directed towards me, she forthwith addressed me with an explicit "*Qu'est-ce qu'il y a pour le service de Monsieur ?*"—to which I was forced to reply with an entreaty for a few words of private audience.

A remonstrance immediately rose to her lips ; probably anticipating a request for credit, or, perhaps an eleemosynary meal. But her greasy hand once crossed with silver, her apprehensions subsided, and she invited me to follow her a few steps apart from the wooden chair forming her

throne of empire ; so that, while answering my interrogatories, she might still keep an eye upon the Scrap-Stall.

“ You are acquainted with Monsieur Jean ? ” said I, coming at once to the point.

“ And if I am, I know no harm of him ! ” was her tart reply. “ If you have no better business, friend, than to ask idle questions about my customers, prythee let me proceed with my own, that yonder lads may be off to theirs.”

“ In a minute—in a minute ! ” cried I. “ I have no idle demand to make. I would only fain acquaint myself what are Monsieur Jean’s pursuits and habits, before——”

“ A *mouchard*,—as I live, a spy of the villain Gisquet ! ” cried *La Mère Urs’line*, recoiling from me as from a viper. While I, aware to what unsatisfactory treatment so degrading an accusation might subject me in a place such as I was then frequenting, silenced her outcries by the summary measure of covering her mouth with my hand, while I assured her, with considerable vehemence, that I was no *mouchard*, but merely a well-wisher to Monsieur Jean, desirous to learn from her, whether he were not in necessitous plights, and had not other mouths than his own to supply from her stores.

“ More, poor fellow, than he has well where-withal to satisfy,” replied the old woman. “ Either

the sick or aged, I suspect, are dependent on his providing; for 'tis always the tenderest of food he chooses at my stall. Poor as he may be—no bargaining;—a question, and down with the money; or his hat pulled over his eyes, and away at once—as much as to say, ‘I have not so much to give.’ And all the time, such a grand look with him, that one dare n’t venture to say, ‘Take it, and much good may’t do ye; pay me when ye can.’ ”

“ Poor Jean ! ”

“ Ay, poor indeed. Every day poorer—every day weaker, and more wasted. It will not last long, I’m thinking. ’Tis now near a year since he first furnished himself here, always with the ready penny. But his visits and his pence grow rare. More’s the pity that a noble heart like his, should ever want.”

“ You think, then, that he is in trouble ? ” I inquired. “ You think money would relieve him ? ”—And, by the flaring of the lamp suspended over the stall, I could perceive that La Mère Urs’line grinned a grin, which plainly inferred, “ *What cares are there that money will not relieve ?* ”

“ Take this, then,” said I, tendering her a small sum. “ When Monsieur Jean presents himself, you will, for the future, be careful to provide him with your best, and in sufficiency. Tell him a

friend has paid his *écot*, and will pay it through the summer." And, without waiting to listen to the flattering epithets with which the old lady seemed disposed to qualify my conduct, I made off again towards the street inhabited by my protégé, in order to inquire of the porter, whether her employer, Monsieur Courvoisin, lived in the house, and was to be spoken with.

"Where had I lived," she roughly demanded, answering my query with another—"not to be aware that Monsieur Courvoisin inhabited the second floor of his residence in the Rue Pavée St André? He did not so much as visit his possessions in the *quartier St Roch* above once in two months; all his arrangements with his lodgers being managed by herself—his confidential *concierge*."

"You can inform me, then," said I, "exactly what sum Monsieur Jean is indebted to your master for the two terms already expired; or, rather, the exact rent per year of the *mansarde* he inhabits?"

"Ten crowns per annum, and not a franc overpaid," cried she; even including the five-franc-piece of *étrennes*, which it is the custom of all the lodgers in the house to present to Monsieur Courvoisin's *concierge* on New Year's Day."

On this hint, I could do no less than stand

reminded that the two terms owing included this memorable epoch of annual largesse ; and without inquiring whether Monsieur Jean had already fulfilled a similar act of justice, placed the specific coin in her hand, with the six others of similar value necessary to make up a year's rent for the lodger of the *mansarde*. Having pointed out to the woman, who had already begun to overpower me with civilities, that " my friend " was now Monsieur Courvoisin's tenant till the ensuing Christmas, she insisted on writing me out a receipt for the money, probably in the hope of making herself acquainted with my name ; but having requested her to substitute that of Monsieur Jean, I desired that the paper might be presented to him on the morrow, with the best wishes of his late visiter.

And thus, having purchased a good night's rest at the expense of little more than a couple of guineas, I cheerfully resigned myself to the loss of my walk in the gardens ; and went home with the flattering unction laid to my soul, that, although debarred from the exercise of philanthropy on a very extensive scale, I might flatter myself with the hope of having now and then Macadamized the flints scattered along the rugged pathway of my fellow pilgrims of the world.

It was my serious intention to take an oppor-

tunity of revisiting La Mère Urs'line, and inquiring further into the prospects of my *protégé*. But the summer heats brought illness, and illness necessitated a removal to Montmorency, for change of air; and, on my return, to the shame of my humanity be it written, I had forgotten Monsieur Jean. Lodging near the Barrière du Roule for the benefit of a purer atmosphere, I ceased to traverse the Marché St Honoré; and the reeking steam pots of the Scrap-Stall, and the broken victuals of its *buffets*, totally escaped my recollection.

One evening—one of those heavy evenings in November, when the chilly fog clings round one's limbs like a shroud glued by the death-damp—it happened that I was alighting from one of the better order of hackney coaches, known by the name of *citadines*, at the door of Borel's celebrated *restaurant*, the *Rocher de Cancale*; when the pleasing contrast of the bright lamps within, or perhaps the still more agreeable anticipation of the excellent dinner I was about to digest, warmed my heart to the point of bestowing an extra franc upon my civil driver. But the man, instead of pocketing my gratuity, stood twisting the coin between his finger and thumb, smiling in my face, and giving me no opportunity to extricate myself from his vehicle.

“ I fancy *not* *bourgeois* does not recollect me ? ”

quoth he, at last. "I am Gregoire, Sir—the same who used to drive No. 109, at your service; but my old master is lately dead, and my good certificates have promoted me to the coach-box of a *citadine*. It was but t'other day, *not' bourgeois*, we were talking of you at the Jacobins, and La Mère Urs'line said, she would give her best copper stew-pan to see your face again; for 'twas not often she had set eyes on such, or so warm-thoughted towards the poor. You see, Sir, Monsieur Jean has been in trouble."

"Aha!" cried I—the name of Jean bringing at once to my mind the whole scene of the Marché St. Honoré—the Scrap-Stall, and gastrophilite hackney coachman. "And why did they not let me know?—But I forget; I gave them no address—no name. I am in fault—I must repair it.—In trouble, say you? Of what nature?"

"The common nature of human trouble, *mon bon Monsieur!*" cried No. 109, casting a significant glance towards the resplendent windows of the café: "an empty stomach, or rather empty stomachs, and nought to put into 'em. Methinks Madame Urs'line said something, too, of sickness and affliction in his family," pursued he, assigning a very secondary influence to all but the disappointments of the appetite. "But I scarcely know what!"—

"We will go and see, Grégoire," said I. "I

retain you by the hour. In twenty minutes or so, I shall have dined, and we will set off and make inquiries."

"Twenty minutes for a dinner at Borel's?" cried 109, with a knowing smile; "a thousand pardons, *not' bourgeois*; but your oysters alone (the small *Murènes* sort are in season now, Sir,) will take you half the time!—But *n'importe!* Here I am, and shall be at your service; and if you miss me at coming out, I shall be no farther off than the sign of the Golden Quince at the corner of the next street. They have *cassis* there of a quality that I make it a point never to come so far as the Rocher without tasting."

Grégoire was, however, better than his word. When I issued forth at the close of one of those exquisite dinners of Borel's which sit as lightly on the digestion as a good action on the conscience, I found him watching through the window the antics of Madame Borel's celebrated Angora cats; and on perceiving me, he whistled to his horses who advanced a few yards at the signal. Down went the steps of the citadine—up went my noble self—the steps—the glasses; and off at a long trot along the Rue Montorgueil towards the Palais Royal. I had directed Grégoire to stop a few doors from the dwelling-house of Monsieur Jean; and this time, at least, I found no

difficulty in procuring admission from the surly *concierge*.

“God bless you, Sir,” cried she, on recognising me—“You are come late; but, I trust, not *too* late; poor Monsieur Jean has had much need lately of his friends.” She even deigned to lend me her candle, (she could not quit her post to give me the honour of her attendance,) to secure me from the perils and dangers of a second *escalade* in the dark.

Nor on this occasion had I much to apprehend from the surliness of Jean. The door of the outer garret was unbolted; that of the inner one wide open, as if to ventilate the chamber. And truly even cold as was the weather, the precaution was needed;—for, within that narrow space, were crowded four living individuals, and a corpse!—

Foremost in the melancholy group that met my eye as I entered the room, was Monsieur Jean, the mere shadow of his former shadowy self—a hectic flush upon his cheek—a wild glare of desperation in his eyes—hanging over and intently regarding a sick infant, which a pale, miserable-looking young woman was soothing and striving to pacify on her knees, lest its cries should disturb some person apparently asleep, on a field-bed placed against the wall—the only one which the denuded chamber seemed to con-

tain. Nearer to the sloping window of the roof, with a tall taper burning on a chair at its feet, lay the body of a young child stretched on a table covered with a linen-cloth; and, ever and anon, between the peevish shrieks of the sick infant, the young mother cast wistful looks towards the remains of her first born;—beside which she longed to weep—beside which she longed to pray—and, perhaps, could her heart have spoken—longed to die.

I was standing by the side of Jean, before he noticed my approach; but when our eyes met, he seemed very little startled by my intrusion; not that he recognised my person, but he cared for nothing now. All the world might come if they pleased, and pry into his wretchedness. The man was heart-broken.

“Have you had medical advice?”—whispered I, touching him on the sleeve.

“Where was I to get it?—What doctor climbs up to the beggar’s *mansarde*?—Are you, Sir, a physician?”

I shook my head in reply.

“A nurse who lodges in the *entresol* of the house, came to look at the other,” said he; “but she told me it was too late for the reach of skill. My boy died of want of proper air and nourishment; and this one is going too, and of the same fever. I know not why we weep:—God

judges better than we judge for ourselves! Why should we wish our children to survive to a life of hunger and wretchedness?"—And the proud man clasped his hands over his face, and wept aloud.

I did not attempt to console him; but instantly and silently quitting the room, betook myself to the concierge, to inquire whether there were no wholesome chamber untenanted in the house; and on learning that the front apartment on the fourth floor was disposable, begged her to make a fire there at my cost, and prepare beds in the two chambers of which she stated it to be composed. I next visited Grégoire, and despatched him in search of a medical man of my acquaintance, residing at no great distance; and having re-ascended to the attic, Jean looked round as I entered, and seemed to welcome my second coming as that of a friend.

"I know you *now*," said he, in a hoarse whisper. "You are the good man who secured us food and lodging at the height of our distress in the summer."

"Let us not talk of that now," said I; "I am much to blame in having so long forgotten you. Unhappily, you still need the consolation of friendship—trust to mine."

"It is too late," faltered he, again clasping his hands. "Some of those dear ones are gone—

others are going—what further need have I to live and suffer?”—

A low tap at the door now attracted my notice, though lost to the ear of Jean; and, going towards it, I found a neat-looking little girl of about twelve years old, waiting without, with an earthen pitcher in her hand.

“Madame Urs’line sends her best respects to Monsieur and Madame Jean,” said she, placing it under my care; “and hopes they will find the *bouillon* good, for she made it for them with her own hands; and she begged me to say she should be able to shut up her stall in an hour or two, and, if it could be in any wise comfortable to them, she would come and sit up. Send back word by me if there be any thing wanting, that she may bring it with her.”

Eager to benefit by the good old woman’s assistance, my orders were promptly given, and liberally reinforced; and by the time the porter arrived with intelligence that the apartment below was warm and ready for the reception of its new tenants, my quondam friend, Madame Urs’line, had also made her appearance, charged with those necessities of life which seemed so miserably deficient in the sick household. One arrival, however, was still indispensable. The sanction of my friend, Dr. Dubois, was necessary, ere we attempted the removal of Jean’s

aged father and dying infant. But this having been at length procured, with an assurance, moreover, that change of air would be highly beneficial to both, we managed with no small difficulty to accomplish the translation.

Dubois and myself aided in transporting the poor old man, insensible to our interference; but I overheard the young wife whispering an entreaty to her husband that no hands but his own might be laid on the dead body of her darling child. With a woman's instinct she still yearned towards the wasted, frail, inanimate remains, stretched beneath that miserable sheet, more than towards all else this world contained! *La Mère Urs'line* was of material service in forwarding our measures; suggesting when *we* should have been ignorant how to suggest, supplying, when *we* were ignorant what was needful. There was no great stock of goods to create confusion. Within an hour all were installed in peace; the old man resting in a clean and comfortable bed, a nurse recommended by the porter stationed by the fire-side, and, in the other room, the mother and her babe reposing in an easy chair, with Jean beside her, watching the effects of the potions administered by Dubois. Already hope shone in their faces. They had found a friend; heaven had not deserted them. It was only the mother who still murmured through her falling tears—"He has

done wonders for us ; but he cannot call back the dead !”

Thus comforted, *La Mère Urs'line* and myself agreed to leave them to their rest. Grégoire was still in waiting to convey us home ; and when I remembered that she alone, herself necessitous and laborious, had continued to minister to the wants of the needy family I had forgotten, I felt proud of being seated in my citadine, driven by No. 109, and side by side with the mistress of the Scrap-stall.

On the morrow I was early at my post ; for I had promised Jean to bear him company in following his child to the grave ; who, but for the timely intervention of Grégoire, would have been consigned to the *fosse des pauvres*, or paupers' grave. I had not courage to witness the anguish of the mother in parting from the body of her child, for to *that* I could bring no alleviation ; but waited with the priest and his silver cross beneath the white serge draperies of the gateway, which the *concierge*, having received my orders for the arrangements of the funeral on a decent scale, had judged it due to the credit of the house to see appended. A bitter winter's wind, mingled with sleet, blew in our faces as we quitted the house to carry forth the human clay unto its parent dust. All was cheerless—all in consonance with the darker realities of life—with want, with

wo, with the cutting off of the young, with the lingering life of the helpless and decrepit.

But it is not my purpose to retrace, pang by pang, the sorrows of the afflicted family, or their gradual restoration to a happier frame of mind and body. Suffice it that every hour of the day I devoted to their service, tended to elevate the kind husband, the devoted son, in my estimation. All that I saw, all that I heard of Jean, displayed him in a noble light; and, within a week of my first re-introduction, he imbibed sufficient faith in my good will to confide to me his eventful history. To relate it with the wild eloquence of feeling that characterised his own narrative, is impossible; but even briefly and simply told, there is a lesson worth a thousand homilies in the life of the hero of the Scrap-Stall.

“JEAN was the only son of a man of high integrity and moderate abilities—(a Marquis, but ennobled by a mere *noblesse de province*) whose family interests had procured him, at the restoration of the Bourbons, a place in the administration with a salary of some twelve thousand francs per annum, a considerable income in France.

“The Marquis, as it may be supposed, was, or became, a stanch royalist; while Jean, who, at the arrival of the Allies, had been on the point of entering the *Ecole Polytechnique*, could by no means reconcile himself to his auspicious

change of prospects. As an *Etudiant en Droit*, (the profession now chosen for him by his family,) he remained an enthusiastic Bonapartist, associated himself with turbulent and disaffected companions, and, although a tender and devoted son, could not be induced to believe that the political intemperance which, at twelve years' old, was regarded as the folly of a boy, might, at twenty, tend to endanger the social position of his parents.

“ His father grew anxious—more, however, for the prospects of his enthusiastic and talented son, than for his own; and in his eagerness to break off certain connexions formed by Jean among the leading liberals of the times, rashly accepted the proposal of a near relative, opportunely nominated to a high diplomatic appointment in the United States, that Jean should accompany him to his destination in the capacity of private secretary.

“ Five years did he pass in the capital of the free country, familiarizing himself with its laws and institutions, a study which did not tend to deliberalize the principles of the youthful patriot; and when, at length, a change of ministry causing the removal of his kinsman, afforded him a pretext for returning to his native country shortly after the accession of Charles X, the Marquis had the mortification to discover that time, which

had so notably matured the mind and improved the person and address of his son, had done nothing towards moderating the ardour of his political atheism. —Jean returned to Europe a decided Republican.

“ During his absence, the Marquis had become a widower ; and all his hopes and affections were now centred in the one beloved son, over whose noble qualities and endowments he still rejoiced with trembling. But the old man clung with eagerness to his official dignities. The very name of ‘ *fonctionnaire public* ’ was to him, as to most Frenchmen, a title of honour.

“ He loved to pass the day over his desk, to take an early station at his *bureau*, and retain it late ; to attend the weekly levees of ministers ; and twice or thrice a year, ensconce his embroidered suit, and perform his Ko-tou before the face of royalty. His three bows of ceremony in the circle at the Tuileries, stood, in the estimation of the foolish old gentleman as an act of loyal devotion, perfuming and embalming his days—past, present, and to come. His son, meanwhile, smiled at his infatuation ; but smiled apart, so as to give neither pain nor offence to the parent by whom he was so well beloved, so ill appreciated.

“ But the administration of Polignac was already exercising its withering influence over the land ;

and Jean, leagued with the high intelligences of the times, a favoured guest in the circles of Manuel and Foy, Laffitte and Lafayette, and the hand-in-hand companion of Béranger, Benjamin-Constant, Jouy, Chevalier, Delavigne, Lebrun, and other chosen ones of the heirs of Fame, became loud among the discontented, and, at length, active among the disaffected. Young as he was, his voice possessed as much influence as his arm vigour.

“ The result of all this, under a government watched for by the Argus eyes, and administered to by the Briarean hands of the police, may readily be conjectured. The Marquis, on a slight pretext, was dismissed from his office; and, although he conducted himself on the occasion with more dignity than might have been anticipated, in the conviction that he had been deprived of his beloved place for the sake of his beloved son, and that in retiring to live upon his scanty patrimony, he should be supported by the noble character and strength of mind of Jean, happiness was thenceforward banished from their little household. But the young patriot had already attached himself to a lovely and accomplished girl, to whose hand his sudden reverse of fortune forbade him to aspire; while the Marquis, deprived of his mechanical occupation, and banished from his daily haunts and ancient neigh-

bourhood, became peevish, sickly and hypochondriac.

“ Jean had, however, too much occupation, and of too serious a nature, on his hands, to lose time in fruitless discontent. The oppressions and exactions of a most unpopular government were daily lending strength and activity to the republican party. The gradually increasing murmurs of the press, like the progressive growlings of a volcano, gave tokens of a coming eruption; and Jean, leagued only with the pure in intention and lofty in spirit, rejoiced in the approach of an hour of danger—a sublime crisis, promising regeneration and tranquillity. He saw that the blindness of the king, and the madness of his counsellors, would accelerate the already inevitable national revolution; and, although incapable of so small an exercise of power as to restore his father to his desk, or reconcile the old man to its loss, flattered himself that he could assist in reversing the destinies of a mighty nation, and controlling the fatality which, from age to age engrafts despotism upon civilization, and bases the throne of royalty upon all that is noble in the world of refinement and of art!

“ He blinded himself to the fact, that a social pyramid, with the people for its basis, and a gradually ascending aristocracy for its superstructure, cannot be complete in symmetry without

an autocrat for its apex. Clever as he was, Jean retained unlimited faith in the existence of the self-denying republican principle, in vain, frivolous, egotistical France!

“The day of trial came. The Ordonnances appeared—the people resisted; and Jean, already guilty of the imprudence of a clandestine marriage, rushed from the blessed retreat of his tranquil home, to defend the cause of his fellow-citizens. A tender-souled and blood-abhorring man, he felt himself under the necessity of serving the good cause, even unto trampling upon the lives of those who spoke his language, and had been reared in the lap of the same mother-country. It was a trying hour! But the cry of ‘Liberty’ and ‘Liberation’ was loud in the land—overpowering even the cries of nature and humanity. Jean, participating in the labours, the dangers, and triumphs of the Three Days, won, and not ingloriously, the cross of July; and witnessed with joy the banishment of the Vampire Bourbon, and the incarceration of his official administration.

“But, lo! where *one* graven image had been thrown down and stamped into dust, another was reared in its stead;—and, on recovering from the brief intoxication of his triumph, the baffled patriot beheld another sovereign seated on the throne of Charles the Tenth, and his young wife

mourning for the loss of her father and brother—victims of that sanguinary struggle. Others had recanted in their creed: but *he*, from that moment, became a thrice-republicanized Republican. A place was offered to him, a pension, an audience, a personal acknowledgment of his services in the thanks of the new monarch;—but Jean was inflexible.

“ *Oiseau timide, fuyant le glu des Rois*—he saw nothing but corruption within the gilded saloons of the Palais-Royal, or haunting the crime-engrained *parquets* of the Tuileries. He had struggled in vain—sacrificed himself in vain—in vain embrued his hands in the blood of his fellow-creatures. Blind instrument of a political intrigue, he had only been the means of seating one Bourbon more upon the desecrated throne of France.

“ It has been said of the death of Benjamin Constant, that a man ‘ may survive the loss of friends or relatives, such being the order of nature; but that it is difficult for a patriot to outlive the loss of a revolution!’ Jean retained *his* life—it was his *doom* to live; for he had now an aged father, a young wife, and soon a younger child to maintain, by the sweat of his brow, or worse still, by the labour of his brains. In his obscure retreat, he toiled by day—he watched by night—to purchase the scanty means of afford-

ing daily bread to these helpless ones. The poor old Marquis never reproached him—his wife, bringing forth children in her sorrow, never reproached him—his elder babe soon learned to entwine its little arms round his neck, and thank him for its frugal meal : and all this gave him strength to live, and courage to labour !

“ It was only when he had leisure to note the gradual abandonment of the liberal system adopted as a temporary measure by the citizen monarch in his new monarchy, that Jean grew really desperate. His writings soon became tinged with the bitterness of his feelings ;—he was arrested, imprisoned, tried, condemned ;—and all that remained of property to the little family was speedily absorbed in the payment of a heavy fine to secure his liberation. They removed to the *mansarde* of Courvoisin’s house ; they fed on scraps ; they encountered disease — *death* ; for Jean had been convicted of having publicly torn from his bosom the cross of July, and appealed to the memory of its martyrs as having suffered in vain !

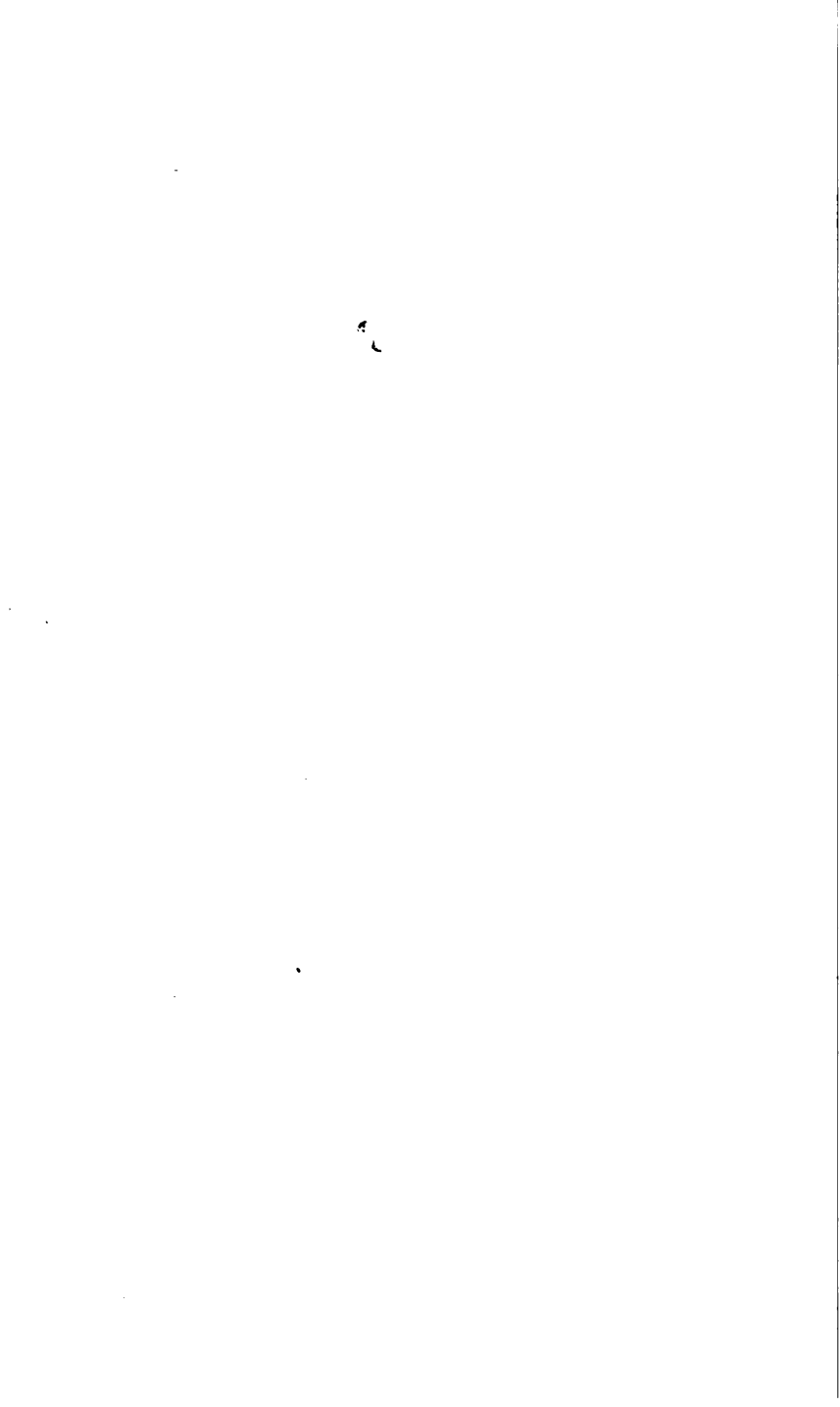
“ He was now under the *surveillance* of Gisquet’s police ; a mark for the accusations of Persil—for the scorn of the apostate Thiers. For Jean was true to his principles. Half perishing with cold—half famishing for lack of food—half maddened by the sight of his grey-headed father’s

tears, his wife's privations, *he* envied not Mordecai the Jew sitting in the King's gate ; *he* spat not upon the symbol of the good cause ; *he* deserted not the cause of the people !"

Such was he when I beheld him first, skulking under the cover of night, to procure food for his starving family. Such, alas ! is he no longer !—Removed from Paris to a secure retreat in the country, his doting father, his wife, his babe, soon experienced the benefit of pure air and nutritive diet. But for *him*, the relief came too late. Vigils, want, broken-heartedness, had undermined his constitution ; and it soon became evident that another victim was doomed to perish. The insurrection and massacre of April served to shake the few tremulous sands yet remaining in his glass. At the very moment when engaged in the composition of an eloquent defence of the prisoners implicated in that fatal affair, a sudden convulsion overpowered his feeble frame, and all was over !—

You may visit the grave of Jean, marked out by a solitary cypress, at the corner of the little cemetery of Passy. His father already lies beside him—his wife will soon be there ;—for, since the death of her beloved, the poor soul has been gradually sinking under her accumulated sorrows. But already I have adopted the little orphan baptized in the life-blood of so many martyrs ;

and, should it be my fate to be summoned hence before he grows to manhood and achieves the independence denied to his unhappy father, I call upon my readers—I call upon all lovers of heroism—of virtue—to prevent the child of Jean, the champion of liberty, from becoming a pensioner of the SCRAP-STALL.



THE SOLDIER'S RETURN.



THE SOLDIER'S RETURN.

It would appear that nothing but the heavy progress of time—nothing but the selfish torpor of middle age—enables us to calculate the mighty ebb and flow of our spring-tide of life, or analyse the clouds and sunshine of “the April climate of our years.” How little do the young appreciate the value of their youth!—that brief season of vivid impressions, when mind and heart and body are alike healthy,—alike untouched by the corruptions of mortal nature;—when the eye sees with its own sight,—the bosom swells with its own emotions;—when the love of God and of his creatures is warm and bright within us,—when the scorn of the scorner has not reached our ears, nor the iron of adversity entered into our soul. Rumours of wrong, and evil, and suffering assail us; but we reject a lesson that finds no echo in our experience. Nay, so

unreal is the picture of human affliction, that we look forth and hail those shadows imparted to the imaginary landscape of life by the homilies of the old and the still mere frigid lessons of written wisdom, as only intended to set forth with brighter lustre the glittering points of joy and prosperity sparkling at intervals upon its surface. "Despair" seems a mere figure of speech; "anguish" a poetical expression; and "woe" the favourite rhyme of a plaintive stanza. Ah! bitter experience!—gnawing, clinging, cleaving curse of mortal sorrow!—wherefore must thou come with thy realities of the grave and the worm, the pang of absence, the sting of disappointment, to prove that the sun can shine in vain, and the spring breathe forth its heavenly breath only to deepen the winter withering within our heart of hearts!

Caroline Wyndham at seventeen was the happiest creature in the world; the buoyant spirits that brightened the lustre of her beauty were the result of health, prosperity, and good humour. Her father had died so early in her own life that the deprivation was unfelt; and her mother (herself a creature of impulse) was consoled for the loss by the endearments of this only daughter, a girl of singular loveliness and promise. Caroline had, therefore as fair a chance of being spoiled, as too much tenderness and tending usually afford to a human "angel" with blue eyes,

glistening ringlets, the foot of a fairy, and the voice of a siren.

The only child of a widow in easy circumstances is predestined, indeed, to darlinghood. The same passionate tenderness that clings to its infancy for consolation, watches over the gradual unfolding of the bud, the luxuriant bloom of the perfect flower, as if no other blossom grew amid the gardens of earth; and if ever an all-engrossing partiality were excusable, it was in the instance of Caroline, who was as variously and lavishly endowed as the princess of a fairy tale. Even the one thing wanting (a deficiency calculated to waken all a mother's anxieties) passed unregarded amid the multitude of her good gifts:—she was portionless. Mrs. Wyndham was aware that a rapacious heir-male was looking eagerly to her jointure, derived from an estate rigidly entailed which she had brought forth no son to inherit; and that a paltry pittance of two thousand pounds, the savings of her frugality, was all the dowry of poor Caroline. But what signified this want of fortune to a girl so fascinating, so admired, so courted;—whose smile was “an India in itself,”—whose price “above rubies.”

It is true that more than one manly cheek was already seen to flush, and more than one manly voice heard to tremble on the approach of her light footsteps; and Mrs. Wyndham, self-secure of a

rich and illustrious son-in-law whenever it might suit her to relax the tenacity of her maternal embraces and part with a companion so beloved, abstained from the lessons of worldly wisdom bestowed by modern mothers upon their children. She was rather anxious to delay than hasten Caroline's choice, in order that she might keep her yet a few years longer wholly her own ;—steal by night like a miser, and gloat upon her treasure when all other eyes were sleeping ;—watch every passing cloud upon her countenance, to secure her from the trivial vexations of life ;—guard her, pray for her, idolise, adore, caress,—luxuriate, in short, in all the raptures of a mother's fondness. At best, it is a grievous trial to relinquish to another's guardianship the sole object of our tenderness.

Caroline's heart, meanwhile, was of too pure and delicate a texture to be easily excited. She had already frowned upon the suit of one titled admirer ; and was readily induced to accede to her mother's opinion that Sir William Wildair was a mere fox-hunter, and Lord Martingale a man of unsettled principles. But, alas ! when Arthur Burlinton arrived with his regiment at Dover, where the Wyndhams were passing the bathing season, and, having contrived to be presented to their acquaintance, professed a sudden faith in the infallibility of the mother, and bent a

knee of adoration to herself, Caroline began to conceive the possibility of a second object of attachment. She was still submissive, still dutiful, still tender to her mother; but, in spite of remonstrance and prohibition, made no secret of her growing predilection for the handsome young devotee.

At first, indeed, the prohibition was moderately expressed. It appeared impossible to the doting parent that her Caroline could cherish a wrong thought or blameable inclination; and the acquaintance was suffered to proceed from liking to love, from love to infatuation, ere she uttered a decisive negative. Conviction, loud words, angry admonitions, and harsh menaces came together;—but they came too late.

“Arthur Burlinton has not a shilling,” exclaimed Mrs. Wyndham.

“He has a liberal mind,” rejoined Caroline.

“Arthur Burlinton has not a grain of interest to push him forward in his profession,” said the mother.

“He has talent and energy,” observed the daughter.

“Arthur Burlinton is a man of low connexions!”

“He has the feelings and sentiments of a man of honour.”

And the spirited girl blushed while for the first

time, she ventured to oppose a mother's authority.

Mrs. Wyndham now attempted a different mode of persuasion.

"My child," said she, "you have been tenderly and delicately reared. Think what it would be to me to leave you exposed to the privations of penury, to the uncertain destinies of a soldier's wife!"

But Caroline's heart was bright with the sunshine of youth; and though, at her mother's bidding, she looked forth into futurity, she could regard no privation as afflicting connected with the fortunes of the beloved Arthur. Penury was a mere word to a creature reared in the lap of luxury; economy a pleasing branch of minor morals; and as to the perils of a military career, her notion of warring armies was purely historical;—the dragoons of that epoch seemed made to grace the splendid pageantry of reviews and parades.

In short, her heart beat so quick whenever Arthur Burlinton's name was mentioned, that she had but little philosophy at her disposal for the consideration of their mutual prospects. She wept, indeed, while listening to her mother's appeal; and Mrs. Wyndham augured wonders from her tears, without suspecting that they flowed

from the consciousness of having already entangled herself in a solemn betrothment with the object of her mother's repugnance. Dreading a still more express and sacred prohibition, she even consented to fulfil the engagement by a secret marriage; Arthur having assured her that the mother who had dealt towards her with such un-deviating indulgence, could not and would not withhold her benediction from a vow already solemnized.

And so far he was right in his calculations; Mrs. Wyndham *did* consent to bless the penitent bride; she *did* extend her hand in pledge of peace to her unwelcome son-in-law; she *did* even hasten to slay the fatted calf, and make merry in honour of these ill-omened nuptials. But there was a touch of bitterness in her voice, and a glance of anguish in her eyes throughout all these rejoicings;—it was plain that she was only labouring to spare the feelings of her rebellious girl. Within a few weeks she sickened, died, was buried, without any ailment beyond the secret pang, betraying—

How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is
To have a thankless child.

Perhaps of the three, Arthur Burlinton was most to be pitied. He knew himself to be the active cause of Caroline's disobedience, the passive

cause of Mrs. Wyndham's untimely end; and whenever he sat watching the tears that stole down the cheeks of his wife, seemed to note anew that mournful wave of the dying mother's head, which was ever present in the daughter's memory. His means were too small to afford to the delicate Caroline those luxuries or rather necessities of her station, which the loss of her cheerful home now rendered doubly necessary; and, worse than all, his own parents were still living, and far more bitterly incensed by his improvident marriage than the mild and affectionate woman whom it had hurried into the grave. The letter in which they acknowledged the avowal of his rashness was, in fact, of too harsh and sordid a nature to be shown to his wife.

She was aware that her Arthur's father was a man of mean extraction, engaged in commercial life in a manufacturing town; that he had placed his handsome son in a hussar regiment in the hope that he would achieve greatness and have greatness thrust upon him, both professionally and matrimonially; but she did *not* know that on learning Arthur's alliance with a portionless girl instead of the heiress anticipated by his cupidity, he had rendered a curse for a blessing, and forbidden the young couple his house.

For some time Captain Burlinton managed to persuade his wife that the peremptory nature of

his military duties alone prevented him from introducing her to his family ; and she, who was so accustomed to the endearments of family affection, vainly sighed after those unknown parents who, she trusted, would some day or other deign to replace her own lamented mother. But she was not yet fully sensible of the importance of that bereavement. It is in the day of our humiliation, rather than in the triumph of our pride, we turn our hearts to God ; it is in our season of sorrow, rather than in the fulness of prosperity, we miss the tender hand that sheltered our infancy from harm, and wiped away the transient tears of youth.

When herself on the eve of becoming a mother, when "fear came upon her soul," she recollected the possibility that the little being about to see the light might see it motherless ; and wept anew for that kind parent who would have loved and sheltered her babe for her sake. Then, for the first time, a terrible sentence seemed whispered in her ears,—“That tender mother is in her grave ;—and thou, even thou, didst lay her there !”—

Fortunately, her evil auguries were premature ; she survived to press a living child in her living arms. But even the joy of that most joyous hour was damped by the same morbid self-upbraiding. While she listened in ecstasy to the feeble wail of

her infant, and felt her heart grow big with rapture beyond the relief of tears, beyond the expression of words,—the thought glanced into her mind that—“ Even so *thy* mother rejoiced in thy birth ; thy mother, whom thou didst hasten to the grave !”

It was in vain that Arthur attempted to combat this afflicting notion. Whatever evil awaited her, Caroline's first impulse was to recognise the blow as a chastisement for her disobedience ; and from the period—and it came but too soon—when poverty made itself apparent in their little household, she seemed to feel every privation and every humiliation as a sacrifice due to the memory of the departed. She struggled, indeed, against such evils as operated against the comforts of Arthur and his child as well as against her own ; laboured diligently, and laid aside all the dainty repugnances of her gentle breeding. She felt that no task could be degrading to the hand of the mother or the wife ; learnt to limit her hours of rest, to habituate herself to activity ; and, but for that one corroding reminiscence of filial rebellion, would have been happier than in the days of her more brilliant fortunes.

Arthur was a man of simple tastes, of high honour, of intellectual pursuits, of equable temper ; and, above all, of the most generous and ample devotion to herself ; and with such a com-

panion, how could his wife be otherwise than happy, and proud of her destiny?

A second year brought a second child, to diminish their stock of comforts, and amplify their sense of happiness. But although Caroline was patient and cheerful throughout all their domestic vexations, her husband had no longer fortitude to mark the wasting of her beautiful form, the sharpening of her lovely features. He saw that she was overtaken, feeble, and sinking under the excess of her exertions; and hastily penning a letter to his father, described in vivid colours the weakness and sufferings of his wife, and asked but for as much pecuniary aid as would afford her an additional servant.

He was refused! “A woman who could break the heart of her mother to gratify her own selfish predilections, deserves to reap the punishment of her disobedience,” wrote Mr. Burlington to his son.

“And he is right!” ejaculated Caroline, who was not only present at the arrival of the letter, but as usual too near her husband’s heart to be kept in ignorance of its contents. “My mother forewarned me against the miseries of poverty and want! It is but just that I should fulfil the denunciation incurred by my ingratitude.—He is right.”

In one point, however, poor Mrs. Wyndham’s

prophecies proved utterly erroneous. She had foretold that amid the humiliations of poverty, domestic disunion would be engendered ; that Arthur, deprived of the diversions and enjoyments of his bachelor life, would become discontented and fractious ; that love would be embittered into hatred by the potent drug of disappointment. But of this, at present, no symptom appeared ; and it was perhaps the deep humility of poor Caroline, the touching and gentle penitence with which she kept holy the memory of her mother, and amid all her trials preserved the reminiscence of her filial rebellion as the darkest and worst, that rendered him doubly apprehensive of inflicting a single thorn upon a heart already deeply lacerated. His tenderness, so far from abating, increased with every comfort he was compelled to renounce for her sake ; and a stranger might have detected each additional mortification by the augmented vigilance of his attention to her wishes.

“ We must be cheerful, love ! ” Caroline would exclaim, suddenly rousing herself from a reverie of deep despondency in which the brilliant picture of her prosperous youth had arisen like a phantom from a tomb : “ we must not wither the hearts of our girls by the premature spectacle of affliction. The eye of a child should gaze upon nothing but gladness ; its ear should drink in none but joyous sounds ; its little heart should not be

chilled under the shadow of sorrow. Arthur, do you remember how gay I was when you first knew me?—do you remember how impossible I found it to believe in the reality of misery?—My mother (my poor mother, whom I destroyed) suffered no trouble to approach me. She chose that my youth should be bright as the summer sunshine; that my heart should cherish her image connected only with remembrances of tenderness and enjoyment. Let it be so with *our* children, Arthur. Let us shut up our miseries within our own bosoms; let them not already suspect the existence of grief and pain. Smile, dear Arthur, smile:—in spite of all our trials, we have riches and joys and compensations beyond the common lot of men;—strong mutual affection, unswerving mutual confidence, and fervent trust in the mercies of Heaven. So long, dearest, as I can hold your hand in mine,—so long as I see those approving eyes bent upon all my doings,—so long as I can lay down my head to rest and hear your breathing in the dead of night, mingled with the murmurs of my children—I dare not commend my destiny to the interposition of Providence. I have still blessings to be thankful for, of which I must not peril the loss by seeming thanklessness. Let us be cheerful, Arthur; let us smile and be cheerful!”

But a period now approached in which to smile

or be cheerful was beyond the efforts of a father and a husband. War was declared!—and, just as habits of strict economy enabled them to limit their wants within their narrow income, and provide for the necessities of four living beings out of a pittance that had barely sufficed the luxuries of one, the prospect of leaving three of the number friendless and destitute, darkened for the first time the hopes of professional advancement. The big, round drops rose on the forehead of the father of the little family, when he contemplated those perils which could only abbreviate for himself the bitterness of a blighted career, but which might render his wife a widow—his children fatherless. His two girls were now old enough to comprehend and report the rumours of the barracks; and it was not many days after intelligence arrived that the regiment was among the first destined to foreign service, that little Caroline echoed the dreadful tidings in her mother's sick room.

Mrs. Burlington had been for some weeks an invalid, and this blow was too much for her enfeebled frame. Delirium was added to indisposition; and the gallant soldier, who felt the impossibility of turning a deaf ear to the summons of honour, even though it claimed him from the bed-side of a dying wife, had the misery of imprinting his parting kiss on lips unconscious of his departure; on lips which, amid all their

feverish debility, refrained not from incoherently repeating, "Even as *she* threatened, so let it be! —The curse is upon me.—No parental blessing hallowed our union. She said it would destroy her, if I wedded with a soldier.—I murdered my mother;—and now I must die broken-hearted, and atone the crime."

She did not, however, die;—no, not even when, on the gradual restoration of her reason, she found she could no longer clasp that hand in hers,—no longer sun herself in that approving smile,—no longer, in the stillness and the darkness of night, listen for the light breathing of the bosom she loved, and feel that a strong arm of defence still secured her against all earthly enemies.—Now all was silent—all blank—all chill—all hopeless. She had nothing left but two helpless children weeping for their father, and the bitter memory of her own filial ingratitude.

"I must struggle against this overpowering weakness," faltered poor Caroline, when she remembered how ill she had been,—how friendless and destitute she was. And she rose from her sick bed, and wrestled with her despair: and by dint of fixing her eyes resolutely and trustfully upon a single bright speck far in the gloomy distance—upon the blessed moment of Arthur's return to her arms after the long desolate period of absence,—she managed to keep the life-blood

warm within a heart which sorrow had well nigh transfixed to marble.

Children are sorry comforters in the house of mourning. They ask for the dead—they ask for the absent; they recall the past, and conjure up endless associations which wound as with an unseen weapon. Caroline could no longer endure even the mention of her husband's name; and yet there was no hour of the day in which these unintentional tormentors did not hazard some conjecture respecting "poor papa," or an inquiry into the nature and dangers of military duty. "Mother, mother!" the helpless mourner would murmur amid her prayers, "very heavily do I atone for my disobedience to thy will;—very bitterly do I experience the 'anxieties of a soldier's wife.' Intercede for me, mother, that I may be released from this one overwhelming trial."—

Ill indeed can we appreciate the ordering of our own destinies! A time was approaching when she would look back upon that period of suspense as one of comparative happiness; when the bitterest struggle of her terrors would seem preferable to the dull, dead, sullen torpor of her despair. Despatches came which set every heart in motion throughout the kingdom; many with the convulsive throb of affection—few with a tremor of emotion equal to hers. The blow was

decisive;—the worst was over at once. Captain Burlinton was reported among the slain. Her mother's manes were fully appeased—she had nothing more to suffer. Arthur was gone,—KILLED,—*dead!* Oh; could he indeed be dead—that bright, that buoyant,—animated,—noble soldier? Yes, many an officious voice already hailed her as a “*widow;*” *she*, who had so rejoiced, so glóried, so triumphed in the name of wife!—Poor—poor Caroline!

The rich have hosts of comforters. Watchful eyes surround the silken canopy, and sympathising hearts wait on the affliction of the prosperous. Burlinton's widow and orphans wept unheeded. A surly landlord alone intruded upon their wretchedness; and, in the depth of her despair, the mourner found that it was by her own exertions her children must be arrayed in the outward tokens of sorrow. There was an officious murmur buzzing in her ears of “respect to the memory of the dead;” and she recollected that the world demanded vain formalities of attire in evidence of that hallowed feeling.

“Behold now and see!—was there ever sorrow like unto her sorrow?”—Her own,—her only!—he for whom she had sacrificed her earthly prosperity, her self-respect, her first and paramount duty of filial obedience—gone—gone for ever! dead—in the crush of battle, without one tender

word from those he loved, without the consolations of religion—the hallowing blessing of his parents. His very grave was amid those of undistinguished multitudes,—unconsecrated by priestly prayer—by the still more holy tear of kindred affection ! “ Surely, I have now expiated all,” said she, meekly folding her hands upon her bosom. She was too woe-struck for tears, too friendless to look for human consolation.

Yet Caroline dreamed not of death as a refuge from her miseries. She knew that she had no right to long for the quietude of the tomb ; that her children called upon her, with an unsilenceable voice, to arise and gird on her strength, and fight for them in the harsh warfare of the world ; and, moreover, she had recently become aware of a startling fact :—she was about again to become a mother. A shiver of agonizing delight agitated her whole frame at the thought. Julia and Caroline were the images of herself, and had been doubly endeared to their poor father by that resemblance. But the little being still to come might perhaps resemble *him* ;—perhaps recall in its living features that beloved countenance which she now wasted hour after hour in striving to recall in unimpaired lustre to the eye of memory, and which some busy fiend seemed intent on obliterating from her recollection. The first tears that burst from her eyes after reading that dread-

ful gazette, sprang forth at the hope thus mercifully presented.

The new trials and duties by which Mrs. Burlinton was now unexpectedly surrounded, inspired her with a desperate resolution. She determined to throw herself on the mercy of Arthur's obdurate father and mother, lest she should die, and leave his children homeless and helpless pilgrims in the wilderness. She went to them,—humbled herself before them—appealed to them as from her husband's grave; confessing her own fault and praying that it might be hers to atone it by the utmost anguish of mortal suffering, provided her innocent children were exempted from the sentence.

The hearts of the two old people relented; they consented to receive the friendless creature beneath their roof. At first, indeed, they bore her presence with reluctance; but there was no resisting her silent, patient, unrepining sorrow. It was useless to upbraid her. They saw that her self-recrimination was severe and unceasing; that two only thoughts occupied her mind—the memory of her offence towards her mother, the memory of her tenderness towards her husband. She had no longer any care for her children. *Their* destinies were secured: she had solemnly bequeathed them to the protection of Arthur's

parents;—to the still holier keeping of their heavenly Father and her own.

It is written, that there shall be joy in the darkened chamber of travail when “a man-child is born into the world;”—eager congratulations are heard,—and even the mother’s feeble voice has an inflexion of triumph. But there were deep sobs by Caroline’s couch when the grandmother, in broken tones, announced that a son was added to her orphans; and her own accents had a sort of stern solemnity when she replied,—“Let his name be called Arthur, in memory of the dead.”—

From that hour, however, her strength strengthened, and her courage grew firmer. “I am now the mother of Burlinton’s boy,” she would sometimes say, in an exulting voice. And then her exultation melted into tears, as she hung over the nestling infant, and strove to trace its father’s features in its face; and unconsciously looked round, as if expecting to meet the triumphant smile of fatherly tenderness with which the gratified husband had greeted the birth of his elder children. “He has no father!” ejaculated the poor heart-riven widow, as she clasped the little tender being closer into her bosom; “but I will love him so that he shall never feel himself an orphan. And *who*—who will love and cherish

me? I destroyed my own fond mother; and Arthur was taken from me in retribution of the crime."

Let no one presume to say "I have drained the cup of bitterness to the dregs:" dark as the night may be, the avenger has storms in his hand to deepen a thousand-fold its murk obscurity. The chances of war, which deprived poor Caroline of the father of her children, now began to operate fatally on the fortunes of the elder Burlinton. The branch of commerce in which his funds were vested was affected even to utter ruin; and he and his aged wife, now reduced to a narrow provision, were chiefly dependant on the labours of the daughter-in-law so long rejected, so humbly submitted to their arbitrary will.

A nursing mother, a grieving widow, she still found leisure to supply to them the ministry of the servants they could no longer command; and to bear unmurmuring the utmost irritation of their peevishness. "They are Arthur's parents," whispered she to herself; "to work for them is a duty he has bequeathed me. Other duties I have outraged,—let me not be remiss in this!" If her spirit flagged in the execution of her task, it was enough for her to contemplate awhile the sweet face of her boy, and it seemed as if her husband's soul were shining out from his eyes, and inciting her to industry. "God will at length forgive me,"

thought poor Caroline. "If I labour diligently to honour *his* father and his mother, my days will be long in the land, to watch over my orphan children."

The summer came again;—the second that had put forth its unheeded blossoms since Arthur last culled and placed them in her bosom; and Caroline persuaded the old man whom bankruptcy had now released from his duties, to remove with her to a small cottage on the coast, near to the well known spot where she had first beheld his son. They dwelt there together, if not without repining, without upbraiding. The old people blessed her with their tenderest blessings; and the children grew and grew, and promised to do honour to their father's name.

One evening, a glowing afternoon in June, when the beauty of the earth seems shining on the eye of affliction as if in mockery of its tears, the little family was assembled in their one lowly apartment; Caroline with her infant upon her knee, the elder girl rehearsing in the ear of her grandfather one of those beautiful lessons of scriptural wisdom to which the bereaved turn yearningly for consolation. It was the Raising of Lazarus!—and when the gentle child came to the words, "Lord! hadst thou been here, my brother had not died," the scalding tears dropped from the widow's eyes upon the little face that smiled up

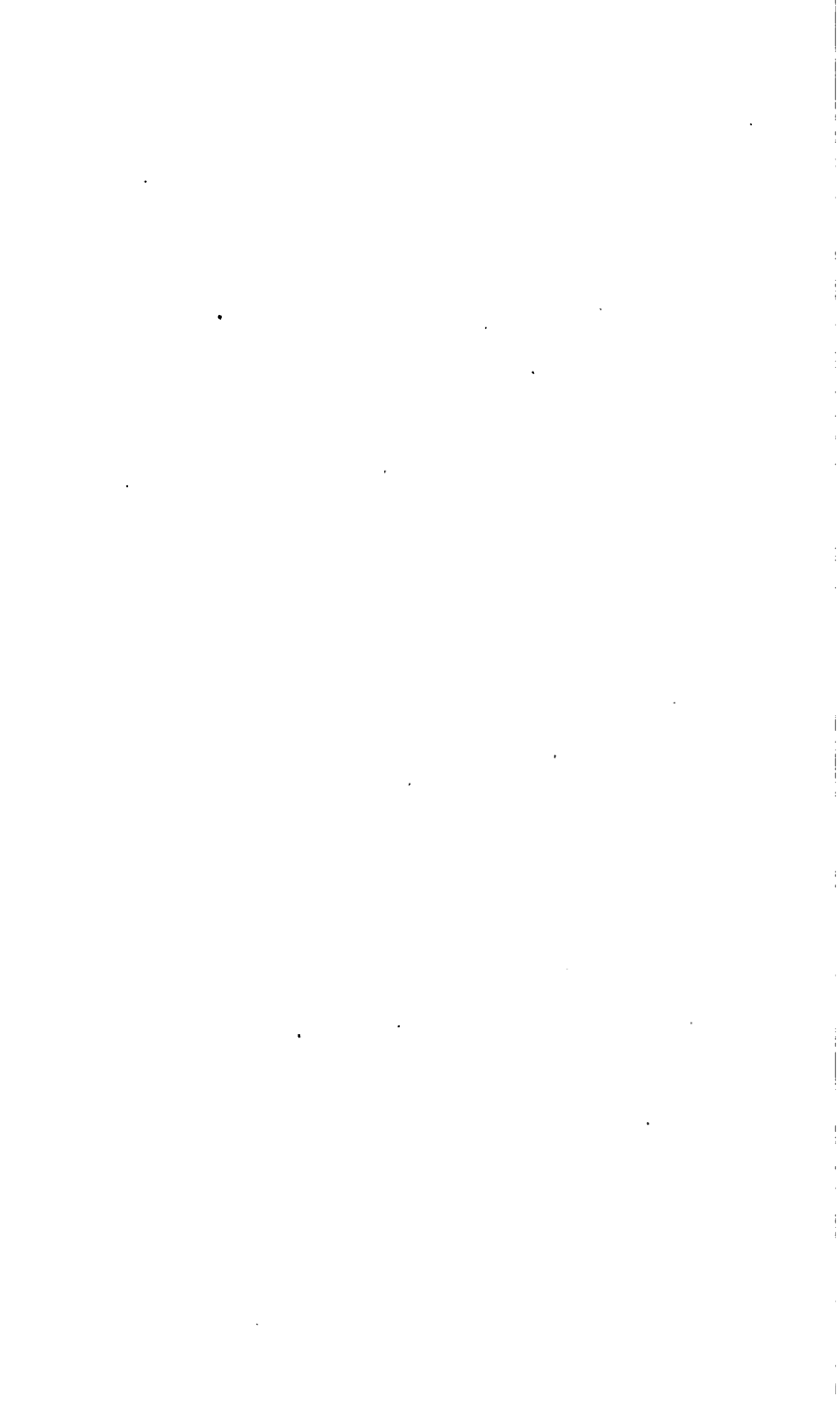
into her own. A strange object had attracted the infant's eye;—even the figure of an officer who stood transfixed at the open door.—A cry of madness burst from Caroline's lips.—The girls called loudly upon the name of their dead father.—The aged people alone were self possessed to see that it was no apparition, but a breathing form of flesh and blood that stood before them.—

“Caroline, my blessed wife!” cried the hoarse voice of the happy Arthur. “My wounds and imprisonment alone caused me to be reported among the slain. I have returned to you rich,—promoted!—Nay,—turn not your face from the infirm veteran who comes to be nursed and caressed among you, and to leave you no more!”

It were vain to describe the delicious agony of that meeting:—the transition of such sorrow to such joy is not a thing for words. Even Caroline could only murmur in thanksgiving, “My prayers are heard!—Heaven and my mother have accepted my sacrifice, and pardoned my transgression.”



THE LIT DE VEILLE.



THE LIT DE VEILLE.

“ Then let the trial come ! and witness then
If terror be upon me ; if I shrink
To meet the storm, or falter in my strength
When hardest it besets me.”

Akenside.

THE vivid ripeness of the hips and hawthorn berries already proclaimed the approach of autumn to the inhabitants of the village of St. Médard, which lies cosily sheltered in one of the green valleys sloping towards the beautiful bay of Moulin Huet, on the southern coast of the island of Guernsey ; and, as the evenings closed in, the shrill blasts of the equinoctial made themselves heard, even through the solid masonry of the venerable farm house—the most considerable of the hamlet—which acknowledged the widow Le Tellier as its liege lady.

Human dignities, be it remembered, are dependent on the scale of a local standard ; and it must be admitted that the “*farm*” of St. Médard, with its patch of garden-ground, its walled orchard,

its four-acre pasture, and single field of lucerne, would have been properly termed a "cottage" in some thriving village of the midland counties of England; nor could the widow Le Tellier, with her humble island costume, and addiction to neighbourly gossip, have aspired to the high agronomic presidency secured her in the environs of Moulin Huet, by the undisputed purity of her breed of Alderneys, and the high price commanded in the market of St. Peter's Port, by her matchless broods of white turkeys, elsewhere than in her native village. There, however, she reigned paramount. The influence created by her good humour was fortified by the ascendancy of her good sense; for, although a plain-thinking, plain-speaking woman, without education, and unenlightened by extensive intercourse with the ways of the world, all that she saw, she saw clearly—all that she felt, she felt honestly. Her popularity, moreover, was by no means decreased by the state of paralysis which had latterly reduced her to comparative helplessness; compelling her to adopt into her household a brother's child,—pretty little Manon of Icart,—who now lightened the labours of her elderly relative, by assuming the care of the dairy and the poultry yard, and her heart, by the constant spectacle of her laughing eyes and cheerful demeanour.

The new-comer soon became as universal a

favourite in the valley as the old resident; and St. Médard was a very happy spot, and Maman Le Tellier's farm the happiest of its boasts. The blue hydrangea tree, gracing one side of its old stone portal, and rising even to the thatch, was the largest and finest in the district; the verberna bushes, overtopping its garden fence, exhibited their spiral blossoms more richly than elsewhere; and the standard fig-tree, the luxuriance of whose dark verdure was sheltered by the gable-end of the house, afforded an abundance of ripe fruit, while the produce of the Château of St. Médard, situated at a quarter of a mile's distance along the *côte*, was still green, hard, and flavourless.

The peculiar charms, however, endearing both the farm, its mistress, and its mistress's niece, to the hearts of their poorer neighbours, was a sort of tenacious conformity with the ancient usages and habits of their birth-place. Some years before Manon's arrival, the neighbouring Château of St. Médard had been adopted as a temporary residence by a distinguished French family, of Norman extraction compelled by the political vicissitudes consequent on the downfall of Napoleon, to retire for a season from their native country.

With these strangers, Maman Le Tellier had been a first favourite. Her kind-heartedness, her serviceability, and *naïveté* of mind, rendered her at all times a welcome guest at the Château; and, on

the decease of Madame de St. Sauveur, it was the good widow who prepared her remains for the grave, and wiped the tears of her three broken hearted daughters; even as she had previously assuaged the sufferings of the dying woman, by many a night of watchful attendance. And when the changes of a government caused by the expulsion of the elder branch of the Bourbon dynasty, admitted of the recall of M. de St. Sauveur to France, it was their parting from the kind cordial widow which augmented the floods of tears shed by Sophie, Claire, and Antoinette, upon the grave of their unfortunate mother.

From the period of their re-establishment in the enjoyment of their noble hereditary estate, the Demoiselles de St. Sauveur had annually addressed to their venerable friend substantial tokens of their regard,—consisting of improved implements of husbandry, handsome specimens of household furniture, as well as rich but simple articles of female attire. Yet,—to the credit of female discretion be it spoken!—even these snares of Satan had the Widow Le Tellier strength of mind to resist! After summoning a village synod, and submitting to the judgment of its elders, the new spades and hoes supplied by her Norman friends,—she was careful to deposit in the store chamber of the farm, the mahogany arm-chair or portable buffet of gilt

china, selected for her use by Antoinette and Claire; and to commit to the safe keeping of a huge walnut wood press, the mantua of rich black silk, or the *cornette* enriched with folds of Valenciennes lace, affording an evidence of the grateful attachment of Mademoiselle Claire.

“ They will form part of Manon’s trousseau,” —the old lady would murmur to herself with a smile, as she scattered bunches of dried orange flowers over her hoards of finery. “ God forbid that I, in my old age, should desert the homely fashions of those who have gone before me,—of those who have bequeathed me the means of comfort, and of bestowing comfort on my fellow creatures !”

And if ever the humble widow could be pronounced amenable to the charge of personal vanity, it was when she cast a momentary glance upon her high crowned Guernsey bonnet, her black stuff petticoat, flowered chintz gown and boddice, stockings of grey worsted, black velvet shoes, and heavy silver buckles; after thus laying aside, for conscience’ sake, the rich but not unsuitable costume provided for her use by her friends in Normandy.

First, however, among the evidences of her rigid adherence to Guernsey fashions and prejudices, which tended to conciliate the regard of the younger neighbours of Madame Le Tellier, was her sanction of the village custom of “ La Veillée !” In

the *salle*, or chamber, “ which served for kitchen, and parlour, and hall,” in the farm of St. Médard, there stood, in the very corner it had occupied for time immemorial, the “ *Lit de Veille*” consecrated to the recreation of the youth of the neighbourhood ; a huge bed frame of rude construction, covered with fresh hay or dried fern, so as to afford a rustic ottoman or divan, whereupon, during the winter evenings, the young people of the hamlet were accustomed to assemble, ranged in a circle, to the number of a dozen or more ;— the maidens occupied with sewing or knitting, the young men entertaining them with songs, while a few droppers-in of maturer ages, occasionally enlivened the “ *Veillée*” with some wise saw and modern instance, some tale of the olden or the passing time, of their own beloved island, or of remoter and less favoured countries.

It was a moment of delight to little Manon, and of gratification to her graver kinswoman, to prepare for the simple ceremonial, by lighting the lamp overhanging the *Lit de Veille*, and adorning the shelves, dressers, and clock case, with fresh branches of verbenas, or festoons of laurel, myrtle, roses, and china-asters ; nor were vast platters of baked Charmontelle pears forgotten, to refresh the young visitors between the pauses of their innocent gossiping. The widow, indeed, who since her afflicting attack of palsy, had been deprived of her former summer enjoyments, and

made prisoner in her wicker chair, now began to look forward to the pleasures of *La Veillée*, even before the island harvest song had resounded in the fields, or the grapes mellowed on her southern wall; and the arrival of autumn, with its long evenings and stirring airs, was any thing but unwelcome at St. Médard.

It was on a fine breezy evening in October, and the tall plants of Michaelmas daisy gracing the less favoured garden plots of the hamlet, were affording one of the last feasts of the year to the busy ramblers of Madame Le Tellier's hives, when an open boat was seen traversing the picturesque bay of MoulinHuet, manned by a couple of Serkmen, who appeared to ply their oars with more than usual activity, under the directions of a young gentleman, whose fanciful costume, of a most amphibious cut, and whose dialect of most amphibious phraseology, might have sufficed to announce to a seamanlike eye and ear one of the modern "marine monsters" of the R. Y. C.!

In spite, however, of the effeminate texture of complexion—discernible whenever the breeze, blowing from the shore, wafted away the light brown curls clustering round his somewhat boyish face, it soon appeared that "the Captain was a bold man," as well as a man wise in his own conceit; for he not only persisted in piloting the course, and pointing out the best landing place

to his companions, Jean-Marie and Gros-Pierre, to whom every pebble on the shingly beach was a familiar thing; but, in spite of their assurances that no house of public entertainment was attainable within a league's distance from the bay, obstinately commanded them to draw up their little craft upon the beach and await his return, while he proceeded inland, with the view of obtaining shelter for the night.

"Monsieur may probably obtain a supper and bed at the Widow Le Tellier's, at St. Médard," said Gros-Pierre, lifting his blue cotton cap, and rubbing, rather than scratching the huge head and stock of hair that discovered themselves on removal of the covering. "And I will step on with Monsieur, and show him the way," added Jean-Marie, drawing up the loose canvass trowsers overhanging his wide topped fisherman's boots. "I have a message to Mademoiselle Manon from her cousin, the harbour master at St. Helier's."

But the hero of the R. Y. C. was apparently as pragmatically bent upon proving his exploratory instincts on shore, as his instinctive seamanship; for, after presuming to navigate the Channel Sea without chart or experience, he persisted in knowing the shortest cut to the unseen and unknown village of St. Médard.

Having admitted to his gallant oarsmen, as they approached the shore, that he now visited

Huet Moulin for the first time, he nevertheless adhered to his pretensions of knowing every oar's length, and every step of his terraqueous way; and even Jean-Marie's allusions to Madame Le Tellier's pretty niece, and obliging tenders of assistance, produced no other result than a somewhat surly request that he would attend to the orders of his employer, instead of intruding upon his society. And while the two jolly mariners stood together on the shore watching, with many a knowing wink, the attempts of the young officer to shorten, by his own ingenuity, the zig-zag ascent of the cliffs they had officiously pointed out to his notice, Captain R— pursued his way with a most Malvolio like smile irradiating his countenance, as if congratulating himself on having baffled the officiousness of the Arion of the Island of Serk.

As he approached St. Médard, however, clambering over stone fences, and making a pathway for himself where pathway there was none, as if really guided towards the wished for spot by some magnetic influence, he was startled to meet, at every second step, some "bucolic juvenal," or gentle damsel of the district, and even groups of young persons of both sexes, one and all attired with a degree of rustic coquetry, betraying a more than usual regard to the minutiae of the toilet, and one and all replying to his inquiry of "Am I in the right road towards the Widow Le Tellier's

cottage?" with a most desponding assurance, that however straight was the way, he was taking it in vain—for that the "*Veillée*" was postponed.

"What the devil is the *Veillée* to me?" was the rejoinder that rose to the gallant Captain's lips; but after sundry iterations from divers persons of the information thus communicated, his gallantry seemed to take the alarm, and he, at length, replied with a well assumed air of interest, "The *Veillée* postponed!—On what account?—You spoke just now of Madame Le Tellier as having a niece: I trust neither of them is indisposed?"

"No! poor things!" cried one of the elder damsels to whom he addressed his inquiry; "they are well enough in health: they are in trouble."

"In trouble?"—echoed the English marine amateur, still affecting a civil sort of sympathy with the unknown fair ones of St. Médard. "Has anything happened to *la Maman*, or to Manon?"

"You *know* them, then?" exclaimed his new acquaintance, with a look of surprise.

"I am a complete stranger here," was the Captain's equivocal rejoinder.

"Ah! I thought you could not be a friend of the family, or you would have been aware," returned his companion, "that this night is the annual opening of the *Lit de Veille* for the autumn,

at Maman Le Tellier's farm. It is only in consequence of the intelligence brought hither this morning of the death of her friend, Monsieur the French gentleman, over yonder in Normandy, that neither aunt nor niece is in spirits to receive us."

"Monsieur de St. Sauveur dead!" again inconsiderately ejaculated the self-styled stranger.

"Dead as Marlbrook!" chimed in a joyous looking youth, who appeared to be the brother, or *fiancé*, of his first respondent. "And Maman Le Tellier is taking on sadly, and Manon is quite down in the mouth. Nevertheless, if Monsieur be seeking a bed at St. Médard, it will never have to besaid that the door of the farm was closed against an English gentleman wanting entertainment."

And thus encouraged, the young Captain proceeded resolutely onwards, resolved to try his luck with the lady mourners, rather than encounter a heavy sea, in an open boat, on a moonless October night. At length the bright blue blossoms of the far famed hydrangea tree of the farm became visible, and the young stranger's colour seemed to rise as he approached the venerable mansion, backed by its fruitful orchard, and facing its diminutive Eden of Guernsey horticulture. In spite of the reassurances he had received, some doubt and perplexity probably remained in his mind as to the diplomacy to be adopted, in order

to secure himself food and shelter from the old lady.

But if the Captain's complexion underwent a change as he passed the threshold, that of little Manon experienced a far more remarkable transition as she caught sight of the new comer. She was hanging over her kinswoman's wicker chair as the young Captain entered the *salle*, listening with unusual gravity of demeanour to the sober strain of reminiscence and exhortation into which the good woman had naturally fallen on learning the demise of her respected friend. But when Captain R—— advanced, cap in hand, towards the widow's throne of state, representing himself, in indifferent French, and with a still more indifferent command of countenance, to be an utter stranger, seeking a night's hospitality at St. Médard, Manon, instead of profiting by the hasty lesson of dissimulation thus imparted, yet blushing the while the colour of a Guernsey amaryllis at her own rashness, bent forward yet closer to the ear of her aunt, to explain in a whisper, distinctly audible to their guest, "*Maman*, this is the English Captain who visited St. Peter's Port in his yacht, last summer, when I was waiting on the young ladies at the Government House, and who was so good as to engage my brother Ancel as his mate. Monsieur Le Capitaine," she continued, turning towards the

indignant R——, and growing firmer in the proud consciousness of candour,—“ you could scarcely suppose that I had already forgotten the kind patron of my brother, or that he would not be welcome to the home of my father’s sister?— But how long have you returned to Guernsey, and why did not our dear Ancel bear you company, to show you the way to the farm?”

“ Ancel remains, of necessity, with my boat at St. Peter’s,” replied the young Captain, evidently vexed and embarrassed; “ we came into harbour only yesterday, after a cruise of some weeks in the Channel; and I had a mind, previous to setting sail for Cherbourg, to visit the bay of Huet Moulin, of whose beauties my friend (Ancel) has given me such flourishing descriptions. Having deceived myself strangely as to time and tide, I find it impossible to return to town as I had proposed. I have therefore to thank your recognition, Mademoiselle Manon; as I trust it will be the means of inducing Madame Le Tellier to grant me a night’s lodging.”

“ Less was needed, Sir, to secure so small a kindness,” observed the widow, bending an inquisitorial eye upon his countenance; and espying perhaps more of incoherence in the history and embarrassment in the face of the English Captain, than she could well account for. “ It would of course have been a great satisfaction here, had

it been possible for my nephew to bear you company in your excursion. Nevertheless, if his duties interfered"—

"It may not be impossible for me to afford Ancel a trip to St. Médard before I quit the island," interrupted the guest, resuming his usual tone of superiority and command. "Meanwhile"—

"Meanwhile," continued Madame Le Tellier, "you will accept the expression of mine and my niece's regrets"—

(Manon's countenance fell! for she began to apprehend that her honest frankness might prove the means of depriving her brother's patron of the hospitality he had sought at the farm:)

"——that the melancholy tiding we have this day received will render your sojourn at St. Médard less cheerful than we could have wished. Our Veillée," continued the warm hearted old lady, looking round wistfully at the *Lit de Veille* prepared for the evening's entertainment, and glancing at the bouquets of fresh flowers placed by the care of Manon on her well burnished *armoire* of house linen, "is postponed for a week. If Monsieur le Capitaine could be persuaded to give my nephew a day's holiday"—

"Certainly, certainly," interrupted her guest, anticipating her demand.

"And deign to accompany the lad on his visit

to his family," continued Madame Le Tellier, proffering an invitation which the Captain certainly did *not* anticipate,—“ we should experience the gratification of showing a stranger, who has befriended him, something of our Guernsey customs. Meanwhile, be pleased to accept such welcome as we are prepared to offer; and to pardon an old woman, who cannot forget in a moment the loss of a friend, to smile upon a new acquaintance.”

The new acquaintance thus cavalierly saluted however showed himself not only fully satisfied with the terms of his welcome, but resolved to improve into friendliness his acquaintanceship with the good matron of St. Médard, by every possible art and concession. He laid aside his self-conceit—he laid aside his dandyism. Rising superior to the superiority he had felt or affected over Gros-Pierre and Jean-Marie, he accepted, without any overstrained expressions of gratitude, the homely fare set before him; and having at length persuaded the hospitable widow to take her place at the board, and share the matchless bottle of old Médoc brought forward by Manon at her kinswoman's suggestion from the most recondite hoard of her cellar, which on being uncorked, sent forth a musky fragrance as of some choice flower-garden, he eventually succeeded in dispelling from her goodly face every shadow of

mistrust, and even in qualifying the gloom of its shades of sorrow.

As evening closed in, Manon saw fit to light the *Veillée* lamp in honour of their unexpected visiter; while Captain R——, with growing familiarity, drew the widow's wicker-chair towards the hearth. The doors were barred against intrusion; the farm lad despatched to the beach had already brought back news, that the boatmen, profiting by their employer's permission, had found shelter for themselves for the night at the mill of Huet; and the trio at the fireside of St. Médard were consequently free to enjoy the warmth and comfort of the *salle*, without any drawback from the dreariness of the night and the howling winds against the casement.

And they *did* enjoy it; and already began to interchange familiar words and phrases, as if unconsciously adopting each other as friends. The stranger was no longer a stranger. Whatever motive, whether a love of the picturesque, or a tender reminiscence of the prettiness and liveliness of the waiting maid of the Governor's daughters, had brought him to the Farm, he now sojourned there as one who was not the less welcome for coming unbidden.

"Your friend, Monsieur de St. Sauveur, appears to have been a martyr to political revolutions?"—he observed, after having listened

with great patience to Madame Le Tellier's diffuse and repeated lamentations over the loss of her Norman patron. "And yet I do not call to mind his name as connected with any particular party, or any great public catastrophe?"

"How should you?"—replied the old lady briskly. "St. Sauveur was the name borne by the family during their voluntary exile. It does not follow that my friends were not recognised under a more illustrious designation in their native country."

"Aha?" cried Manon, instinctively laying down her knitting pins, and tossing back the ringlets from her open forehead, on this hint of a secret to be unfolded. "Yet every one at St. Médard"—

"Every one was scarcely likely to be admitted into their confidence," interrupted the widow pettishly. "The good Marquis chose his confidants as his own clear judgment suggested; nor did he, I trust, find cause to regret its suggestions."

"He was in fact, then, a very great man, and living *incog.* at the Château?" said Captain R——, interrogatively.

"He was living under an assumed name, Sir," replied la Maman; "nor should I admit so much, but that, although no public cause for concealment now exists, I am satisfied it would be im-

possible for you to obtain a clew to his real title and position in life. For my own part, ignorant as I am of the very nature of what you are pleased to term political revolutions, I cannot presume to decide upon Monsieur de St. Sauveur's personal or public consequence: but this I know, that if, by a 'great man,' you mean a man of mighty purposes, of great and good principles, a man, above all, holding control over his own passions, and able to carve out for himself the duty path of his own career,—such a one was the friend whom I have lost! Yes! he *was* a great man!"—repeated the widow, after some moment's meditation; "few greater,—few capable of such sacrifices,—such moral heroism. The idols *he* made for himself were not of common dust; and *who* ever worshipped with half so much piety of affection?—God bless him,—God rest him!—He is now reaping his great reward, among the elect of the children of God!"—

"You speak with considerable enthusiasm," observed R——, rising from the *Lit de Veille*, on which he had inadvertently seated himself. "Recollect, however, that *I* know nothing of the St. Sauveur family, and am forced to accept their virtues upon trust."

"Listen then!" resumed Madame Le Tellier. "Take the seat again which you have just quitted, and for once, I will play the gossip; in order that,

although our Veillée is impossible, you may not quit the island without imbibing some notion of its fashions. To you, who have no interest in penetrating the secret of my friends, I may venture to confide a mystery, such as I should be loth to breathe in the ears of my neighbours here of the hamlet!"—

"A mystery which regards the young ladies, Sophie, Antoinette, and Claire?" cried Manon, clapping her hands with the excitement of the moment. "Dear aunt! you will surely allow me to sit up and profit by the Veillée?—You well know that you can have confidence in my discretion!"

"Not much in your discretion, my poor child," said her kinswoman, kindly tapping the cheek of the girlish face that presented itself, as Manon knelt anxiously yet playfully at her feet; "but not a little in your good will; and still more," she added with a good humoured smile, "in the impossibility of your turning to mischievous account the information I am about to impart. The very name of my friends is undreamed of in Guernsey; even that under which it was their pleasure to be known, will be heard here no more. Two of the young ladies are on the eve of honourable marriage; the third, my pretty Antoinette, is already a wife and a mother; and when the grey head of old Victorine Le Tellier

shall be laid in the grave, with *her* will rest the secret of their probation!"

"Except such a portion of their history as you have promised to communicate?" cried Captain R——, bent upon enticing his companions into sitting up to bear him company, rather than curious to learn the promised particulars.

"My promise will cost me a pang or two!" was the old lady's reply. "Manon, lay down another log upon the hearth, and bring down the lamp a link. The room looks cheerless, or my eyes are dimmer than usual. And set upon the fire a skillet of Bordeaux, with a stick of cinnamon, and the zest of one of our own citrons,—for the English Captain will want a sleeping draught to make him turn a deaf ear to the whistling of the north-wester in our chimneys. So!—now be seated and quiet," continued Madame Le Tellier, evidently prolonging her directions and injunctions, so as to postpone the commencement of her task, and subdue the emotions which a mere recurrence to the name of St. Sauveur had sufficed to draw forth.

"It was six years ago, and summer time," said she, commencing at last abruptly, "when a French family came to settle at the Château of St. Médard; and no sooner did I set eyes upon them, than I felt that they *ought* to come with the summer—with the butterflies—with the roses

—with all things that are beautiful in nature ; for more beautiful than all these were the three daughters of Monsieur de St. Sauveur ! Never shall I forget their appearance as they stood, the very evening after their arrival at the Château, hand in hand at my garden gate, with the sunshine streaming upon their flowing curls ; and not all its brightness, nor all the brightness of the flowers which had attracted their notice, one half so gay and lightsome as the smile of their own sweet eyes ! The arm of Ma'amselle Sophie, the eldest daughter, rested on Antoinette's shoulder as she advanced to inquire whether I were the Widow Le Tellier, of whom they had heard so much from the Notary at St. Peter's Port, charged with the letting of the Château ; and whether I could kindly oblige them, by stepping up to see their mamma, (who was a great invalid, or she would have visited me herself,) to ask my advice respecting the ordering of her new establishment ?

“ There was something in the young stranger's voice sweet as the combs of my own hive honey,” —continued the widow ; “ and little Antoinette, who was not more than twelve years old, having lifted the latch, begged me to put on my bonnet, and accompany them at once, as it would be a great comfort to their poor dear sick mamma.—I had no power of refusing. She took my hand,

and walked prattling by my side, as we ascended the côte together; and when we reached the old terrace gardens of the Château, the two elder girls joined in her exclamation of ‘ This wilderness is disgraceful, Madame Le Tellier, after the beautiful garden plot at the farm. You must teach us to put it into better trim. Papa is not rich enough to keep a gardener, and has too many anxious thoughts to admit of his troubling himself about such trifles. But we will all work in it, in hopes to raise some flowers for mamma, and remind her of dear France.’ And already they had tied up into a bouquet, for the poor sick lady, the flowers I had hastily gathered for Ma’amselle Antoinette before we left the farm.

“ Well, Sir, we reached the Château, as I have told you; and never before had its grey stone walls, mossed over with tufts of capillaire, appeared so cheerless to my old eyes. The house had stood so long empty, and, though in good repair, was so dingy with disorderliness, so unhumanized, as one may say, so cobwebbed, so neglected, that it seemed every way unfit for the reception of the young, brilliant, blooming creatures, who now led me by the hand into the hall. I could not help feeling that every thing, and fancying that every one connected with so much health and happiness, ought to be as smiling and sunshiny as themselves. But when I entered the saloon,

which, by the care of Monsieur, and the arrival of their property from St. Peter's Port, had been already converted into a comfortable habitation, how grievously was I undeceived!—Scarcely had I glanced at the Lady Marchioness, as she reclined on a sofa, drawn towards the open window, when I felt a chill come over me. It was the first time I had ever looked upon a human face stamped with the seal of hopeless misery!—I had seen the poor, the sick, the humbled, the wretched; vagrants from the coast had stopped to beg at my gate, hungry, helpless, and more than hungry or helpless, for they were struggling with the hunger and helplessness of the children who clung to their backs, or tugged at their ragged garments.

“But these were not hopeless.—Not one among them had that God-abandoned look which had withered the beautiful face of Monsieur de St. Sauveur's wife: it was as if her crown of thorns had pricked too deeply for the endurance of mere human flesh and blood. Her children seemed involuntarily to curb in their playful steps and subdue their young voices, as they approached her presence. Yet, Heaven knows, it was at no instigation of hers; for she was milder than mildness can be—patient, meek, and self-neglecting. It was that they had been early accustomed to the spectacle of sorrow, and nurtured in habits of deference towards afflictions they could not un-

derstand, and infirmities they could not assuage. Poor girls!—poor, precious, miserable mother!—God be with her in her rest! God be with her!” —and, unconsciously, the kind widow crossed herself in humble piety, as she recurred to the sufferings of the departed.

“ Monsieur de St. Sauveur showed also the look of a man who had found troubles to wrestle with,” she resumed, after a short pause. “ But *his* cause of grief was evidently of a very different nature from that of Madame. Poor ignorant woman as I am, I could see in a moment that his were vexations he could meet face to face, with an uplifted eye, without shame, before God or man. And I was right. *His* misfortunes had arisen to him in his adherence to the cause of his master—in his fidelity to what he believed to be the true interests of his country. He had nothing to repent or to regret but the failure of his endeavours. He had striven to serve his fellow creatures; he had buffeted with the waves for their sake. What fault of *his*, if Providence had left him a wreck upon the shore?

“ The fine, stern, independent countenance of this noble gentleman won upon my heart still more, if possible, than the courtesy and graces of his family. I was glad, and, luckily, I was *able* to serve them. The infirmity of the Marchioness’s health rendered it impossible for her to interfere

with the establishment of the family in their new abode ; the young ladies were too young to be useful in such matters ; and Monsieur, though full of good-will to adapt his habits to his change of fortunes, was too high-minded a man, too accustomed to liberal house-keeping and the thriftlessness of opulence, to do himself justice in his dealings with strangers. It pleases me to think that I spared them all both trouble and vexation, and even *money*, of which they understood not the value. For *my* part, I was amply repaid by the pleasure superadded to my life in the spectacle of their fair faces, and the cheeriness of their young voices, when the three girls visited me every morning with some message or commission from the Château ; for I had nothing of my own about me *then* to love," said Madame Le Tellier, glancing at Manon. "My husband was in his grave ; and my only brother was at that period prospering in the world, and would not spare me one of his children to make a friend and fondling. Things were well then at the farm of Icart."

Little Manon rose from her knees at this allusion to the reverses of her parents, and began to busy herself in arranging the skillet upon the fire, so as to conceal her face from the inquisition of the English Captain.

"And yet," resumed the aunt, too much absorbed in her own reminiscences to notice the

change of countenance of the mortified girl, “dearly as I loved them all, I seldom visited the Château. There was something in the sight of the Marchioness’s despondency—an ailment that I could not cure, a grief that I dared not even notice—which went straight to my heart, and made it ache for the remainder of the day, whenever I was compelled to have speech of her. So deeply, *deeply* humble was her look,—so submissive the tone of her voice,—that one felt a thousand times humiliated by the sight and sound. One longed to kneel down in the dust, to be meeker, and of a more Christian-like lowliness than herself. The poor lady seemed to be in a perpetual state of penance; ever shrinking away from her fellow-creatures, lest peradventure they should place their finger on some sore spot—some hidden source of torment. So, at least, it seemed to *me*; and strangers often see most of a sufferer’s feelings surrounded only by those whose views are magnified by excess of tenderness.

“Monsieur de St. Sauveur attributed all the melancholy of his wife to her sympathy in his misfortunes—all her struggles to a desire to overcome the influence of adversity; while the children, looking upon their gentle mother as a miracle of earthly excellence, believed her a pre-destined saint, chastened with physical suffering by the hand of God in proportion to His divine love

of her virtues.—None, alas! dreamed of a worm concealed within the decaying fruit, but poor old Victorine Le Tellier!

“The troubled in mind are usually quickest of discernment: the poor dear lady soon discovered that I saw farther into her condition than those who were nearest to her; and instead of mistrusting my scrutiny as the evil-hearted might have done, sought my company the more when she saw that I attributed her languor and emaciation, and, above all, her exertions to overcome her occasional attacks of nervous excitement, to something more than indisposition. She did not, it is true, trust me with greater confidence; but seemed to like to have me near her, and have me near her children, and to feel it a relief when, during Monsieur’s occasional excursions in the country, or to the neighbouring islands, I took his place beside her, to bathe her hollow temples, or lend her my arm as she sauntered along the terraces of the garden.

“‘Do not let the girls accompany us,’—she would say, when I had trudged up to the Château to offer her my services; as if *I* had more authority than herself with the young ladies, and as if the sight of their happy faces was too much for her enfeebled eyes. And then she would creep on and on, with feeble steps, as if she wanted to be alone with nature and the skies, and knew that I should watch over her safety without intruding

upon her meditations. And once or twice, in the twilight, when I had guided her the utmost length she could venture from home, and there was nothing but the evening star over our heads, and the calm hush of the garden-thickets around us, I have seen her clasp her poor thin hands, and lift her eyes to the throne of the Almighty, with such a bitter, *bitter* look of supplication!—May I never live to see such a look again upon any human face!—At such times, when perhaps she had kept silence for an hour or more in my presence, if the voice of one of the young ladies was heard at a distance, the poor mother would start and tremble, and whisper to me, ‘*Not now*; do not let them approach me *now*. I must—*must* be alone!’ But if it happened to be the Marquis who came to meet us, although she clung to my arm for support and trembled with the same secret emotion, she never attempted to interdict *his* company. He would have flown leagues at her bidding, and in no single instance did I ever see him attempt to contravert her will;—and yet she did not presume to express to *him* her desire to be alone. The sense of conjugal duty with her was all in all.

“ ’T was a strange thing, too, that, dearly as her children loved her, the sight of the Marchioness’s settled melancholy never seemed to affect their spirits, unless when her presence warned them to moderate their joyous tones within hearing of the

sufferer. They had grown up with the sight of her sorrow ever before their eyes. They could not figure their mother to themselves otherwise than as a suffering saint. It was in *that* guise they understood and loved her; while they loved each other with all the buoyant earnestness of youth. Those three fair creatures, Sir, were never apart. One place of rest sufficed them; they knelt side by side for their evening prayers; and when the morning sun beamed upon them again, it was to each other that their first exclamations of joy and love were fervently addressed. Sophie would have dedicated the whole worship of her heart to Claire, but that there was an Antoinette in the world; and Antoinette would have conceived it impossible to love any thing but Sophie, had not the soft blue eyes of Claire recalled her to the remembrance of an object equally beloved. There was but one heart, one soul, one hope, one consciousness, among the three. They had no need to consult each other—to confide—to argue:—they were one!—one doating child to their poor mother—one duteous and pious daughter to the father they revered. To live apart would have been impossible to either of the three; for as yet no pulse of womanhood was stirring in their innocent hearts, to suggest the existence of other ties, or the future duties of the wife and mother.

“But all this was drawing to a close,” continued old Victorine, wiping her eyes; “and *I* was the only person who foresaw that a catastrophe was at hand!—Every day, when I visited the Château, I perceived that the sick lady was feebler and feebler than the day preceding. She no longer quitted the house; she could scarcely turn upon her bed of misery without assistance; the only food she tasted was *tisane* of capillaire and other simple febrifuges, prepared by my hand. Yet she never murmured! Her answer was always ‘Better’ in reply to the anxious inquiries of her children. And they believed her! Affection is so sanguine in its hopes and confidence.

“Nevertheless, as winter approached, the Marquis began to discern symptoms of an alarming change; and much against the desire of the invalid, a physician was fetched from St. Peter’s Port to issue his mandate upon her case. But mandate there was none to issue. The gentleman was compelled to avow that, although her broken constitution proclaimed his patient’s condition to be hopeless, he could guess nothing of the sources of her disorder. He knew that she must die—that was all!—and if every learned man were as honest, it is, perhaps, the utmost Doctors have to unfold. But guess, Sir, only guess the change which those few words wrought in the family at the Château!

—The first time I beheld the Marquis after the departure of the physician, he looked as if he had been turned into a statue of stone. There was something in the long-enduring sickness of his lady which he had seemed to reverence, as though it were the probation of a martyr, and unamenable to any mortal remedy; but now that the sentence was gone forth,—that he knew the dust he loved was with the dust about to mingle,—he began to reproach himself that he had not earlier applied to human aid in her behalf. It was not till she was on the eve of entering into the joy of her Lord, and putting on immortality, that her husband seemed to recollect she was born of woman—a mere child of clay, like others of the earth!

“I will pass over that season of affliction!” faltered Madame Le Tellier. “During the gradual decay of the sufferer, it appeared to me a strange but evident thing, that the poor, meek, humble invalid, so long prepared for the worst, and so *well* prepared by the exercise of every Christian virtue, shrank from the final consummation!—At times, indeed, a heavenly fervour was in her uplifted eyes, as if Hope still existed for her on high. But, immediately afterwards, a shudder would come over her wasted frame, as though her glance had suddenly fallen upon some dark abyss, still intervening between herself and eternal life.

Deep, deep sighs would burst from her labouring breast when she found, or fancied herself alone ; and often when I greeted her, of mornings, with gratulation that she had rested well, she would answer, in a broken voice, ‘ God is too good to me !—He is leading me with a tender hand towards the darkest of all my trials.—Pray for me, good Victorine ;—dear Victorine, pray for me,—that his upholding strength may not be withdrawn when my need is the sorest.’—Alas, alas ! Sir, that was a heavy, *heavy* winter to me !”

“ Do not distress yourself by concluding your narrative to night,” said Captain R——, perceiving that not only the cheeks of his venerable hostess were wet with tears, but that even Manon had drawn aside, and was sobbing violently.

“ Nay !” said Maman Letellier, “ my tale is well nigh ended, and I would willingly recur to it no more.”

“ It is truly a melancholy night,” replied the guest, approaching nearer to the hearth, so that his arm could reach the back of the chair, on which little Manon had concealed her face. “ The wind howls dolefully among the trees. There will be a hurricane before morning.”

“ And yet,” resumed Madame Le Tellier, “ the weather is not half so portentous to-night, as on the desolate Christmas Eve when I was roused from my bed by one of the servants of the Châ-

teau, to attend upon the dying moments of Madame de St. Sauveur. Throughout that day she had been better ; had occupied herself in overlooking her papers, and communing with her daughters, respecting their preparations for the religious duties of the season. But towards night she became suddenly worse, and at midnight, the Marquis, foreseeing the necessity of my presence, forbade the servants to retire to bed. Having instantly obeyed his summons, I wrapt my cloak closely round me, as I stemmed the violence of the wind in following old Gabriel up the ascent of the côte. The gusts soon extinguished the lanterns with which we were provided ; but we could not miss our way, for in the chamber of the dying woman high in the Château above the path, there burned a melancholy watch-light, shining out through the darkness of the storm with a fearful and unnatural radiance.

“I was soon by the bed-side. By the light of that ill-omened lamp I looked upon the pale, pale face of Madame,—scarcely distinguishable from the white pillow on which it rested ; and noticed the slender hands devoutly crossed upon the breast of the sufferer, as though it had been too great an indulgence for a dying sinner to suffer them to be clasped in the endearing grasp of the loved ones who knelt around her couch.—Mademoiselle Sophie’s

head was buried in the coverlid ;—Claire and Antoinette were entwined in each other's arms ;—but on the face of the poor father was utter despair.

“ ‘ Take courage ! ’ said I, after having bent over her, and examined her countenance. ‘ Heaven is giving her renewed strength. Her breath is free—her pulse beats stronger. Speak, dear lady ! Set their hearts at ease !—You are better—are you not ? ’ ”

“ ‘ *Almost well !* ’ replied Madame de St. Sauveur, in a voice whose hollowness startled her hearers with horror. ‘ Raise me up, Victorine, and give me my last measure of earthly sustenance, that my soul may bless you before I die. ’ ”

“ Although nearly motionless, Sir, with awe, I obeyed her injunctions. I raised her in my arms—I lifted to her lips a cordial potion ; and, as she stooped her head to drink, I heard a murmur between her parched lips.—And trembling as I listened, I wiped away the heavy dew from her dying brow, and supported her emaciated frame in my arms, when, on a sudden, she called wildly on the Marquis to draw near, and cried aloud in a hoarse voice that she must not die till all should be accomplished.

“ ‘ I cannot go hence, ’ said she, ‘ till justice has been done. A secret lies heavy on my soul—to weigh me down to destruction. My husband will

curse me in my last moments—my children will loathe me in the grave—yet, behold, my task must be fulfilled.’

“ ‘No, no, no!’ ejaculated Monsieur de St. Sauveur, breathless with consternation, and willing to impute the incoherent words of his wife to delirious excitement. ‘You are destroying yourself by this violence. Tranquillize your nerves by a night’s rest. The Curé of Icart has been sent for, and in the morning, the spiritual consolations of the Church will restore you to a happier frame of mind.’

“ ‘He shall seek me in the morning and he shall not find me,’ answered the Marchioness, in a wild but solemn voice. ‘But tell him that if I died unblessed by the sacraments of grace, it was that I held myself unworthy to approach them in my struggle with death; although, if earthly penance may avail in the sight of the most high, for years and years I have neither stirred nor rested, save with the remembrance of my sin before my eyes.’

“ ‘If not in mercy to yourself,—in pity to *me*,—desist!’ cried the poor Marquis, covering his face with his hands.

“ ‘Nay!’ replied the dying penitent, in a tone hoarse with the near approach of death; ‘I have deferred my confessions too long already.—Husband, my eyes are dim, and I behold your face no longer.—Children, my hands are cold as the clod of

the valley, and your embraces must be mine no more.—Grant me only a word of pity,—a word of pardon !’

“ ‘Mighty heaven !’—cried Ma’mselle Sophie, almost distracted, ‘restore her to herself !—She raves !’

“ ‘Oh ! no, no,—I am *not* raving,’ faltered the Marchioness. ‘With the full and perfect possession of my faculties, I avow that *one of the daughters now weeping beside me, is not the offspring of my husband !*’—

“A thunderbolt falling into the chamber of death could not have produced a more startling sensation. The horror of the announcement burst at once upon the minds of the girls.—*One* of them, then, was an alien.—*One* of them was about to be cast forth !—*One* of them on the verge of orphanhood !—Involuntarily the three sisters precipitated themselves at the feet of him whom each still trusted might be her father. The words resounded in their ears,—*One* of them is not the offspring of my husband !

“ ‘Oh ! do not say it is *I* !—Mother, mother ! say not, say not, that it is *I* !’—cried Sophie, writhing with agony.

“ ‘We have been so happy together !’ ejaculated Claire, embracing both her sisters ; ‘and must we part at last !’—while Antoinette, pale as her dying mother, was unable to utter a syllable ; but kept

convulsively kissing the hand of the Marquis, as if a sentence of illegitimacy would prove to her young heart a sentence of death.

“ ‘And since I must die with the brand of guilt upon my brow,’ added the dying woman, ‘let me at least atone the injury I have inflicted by a final act of justice.’

“ ‘Not another word!’—cried Monsieur de St. Sauveur, advancing solemnly towards the bedside; ‘*such* atonement were a deeper injury. I *have* loved—I *love* these three children as my own.—I cannot spare the one of which you would deprive me.—I have heard too much—I wish to hear no more!—You have robbed me of my tenderness towards the wife of my youth; bereave me not of one of my beloved girls!’

“The sisters sprang at once into his arms!—They bathed him with their tears,—they clung to the heart, the generous heart of that best of men; and lo! a flush of indescribable joy lighted up the countenance of the guilty mother, whom for a moment they had forgotten.

“ ‘I die content!’—she faltered, laying her poor head upon my shoulders. ‘The innocent one will not be driven forth to perish. Blessings on *him*—blessings on them—I die content.’

“Loudly, at that moment, did I call upon the Marquis, to extend his hand to her in token of forgiveness, for I saw that her spirit was passing

away. And after a moment's pause, he did so ; but the concession came too late. She was gone ! she was at rest !—Yet I would have given much that her dying ears had caught the parting adjuration of her husband :—‘ Thy sins be forgiven thee above, as *I* have truly and freely forgiven them !—*Vade in pace.*’—

* * * * *

“A few hours afterwards, and as the morning sun broke into the chamber, and shone upon the corpse, a smile dawned on the dead face of the Marchioness, as though her triumph over her misery was accomplished ;—as though she had surmounted the ordeal—as though the Supreme Creator, who had fostered her repentance and perfected her expiation, had received her into the number of his elect.”

“And think you that the Marquis had strength of mind to inquire no further ?”—said Captain R—— mistrustfully.

“He was a man of honour, Sir,” said the widow reproachfully ; “and he was a Christian ; and before the remains of his wife were cold, he proceeded in my presence to consign to the flames every paper and memorandum she had left ; peradventure lest, in a moment of human frailty, he might be tempted to do that which years of repentance could not avail to efface. He mourned for her as for a wife whom he had loved ;—he was the best of

fathers to her children;—and if the blow which had thus cruelly and unexpectedly fallen upon him tended to shorten his days, he had the consolation of having fulfilled a heavy duty.”

“And did you never discover,” resumed Madame Le Tellier’s guest, “which of the three daughters was the one to whom the generosity of the Marquis was in truth available?”

“Far be it from me to have made the attempt!” said the good widow. “Yet methinks no one who witnessed, or hath heard speak of the conduct of the Marchioness, need entertain a doubt upon the subject. Think you that a woman of such depth of feeling would have born a child unto her husband, after having once stooped to shame?”

“It was Antoinette, then!” said Captain R—— musingly,—“the youngest”——

“The youngest and best beloved, the especial favourite of the house,—she who, thanks to the glorious goodness of Monsieur de St. Sauveur, is about to share the fortunes of her sisters; having already become the wife of an honourable man; whose haughty family would assuredly have rejected the alliance of a nameless alien.”

“You are right, Madame Tellier,” cried the English gentleman, as if reluctantly convinced.

“Your departed friend was indeed a great man;—for *who* so mighty as he who accomplishes the subjugation of a powerful human passion? I

fully sympathize in your respect towards such a man!" continued he, tossing off the cup of spiced Bordeaux, which Manon had placed, meanwhile, on the table by his side; "I rejoice with you, that your friend, your Marquis, your whoever or whatever he might be, was restored to his native country, and died in the enjoyment of his estates."

"And blessed in the happy prospects of his grateful children!" added the widow, motioning her niece to withdraw her chair from the hearth, and aid her in retiring to rest. "And now, young gentleman, good night, and happier dreams to you than my narrative, I fear, is likely to excite. Visit us again with my nephew in a week or two, and Ancel's arrival at St. Médard shall be the signal for a new Veillée. We will *then* make a merry night of it. It is not often that so mournful a history consecrates the annual dedication of our LIT DE VEILLE."

THE MILLER OF CORBEIL.

THE MILLER OF CORBEIL.

“ Why marvel ye if they who lose
This present joy this future hope
No more with sorrow meekly cope ;
In madness do those fearful deeds
That seem to add but guilt to woe !
Alas ! the heart that inly bleeds
Hath nought to fear from outward blow.”

Byron.

IN rural landscape, the French are apt to prefer the beautiful to the sublime. The scenes “ by savage Rosa dashed” are not near so much to their fancy as those which “ learned Poussin drew ;” and the Lake-land valley, conceitedly described by Avison as “ Beauty lying in the lap of Horror,” would have filled their souls with consternation. They love a scene whose very surface bears the promise of corn, wine and oil,—a land flowing with milk and honey,—a Canaan which borrows no enhancements from the picturesque. The rocks of the royal forest of Fontainebleau described by Francis I. as *mes déserts*, are regarded by the Parisians as terrific,

rather than as constituting an element of beauty in a woodland landscape ; and a smiling scene,—more especially the scenery of *ces rians côteaux de la Seine*,—affords the greatest attractions to the *badauds*, or cockneys, of the French metropolis.

For this reason, Corbeil is a favourite spot with them ;—Corbeil, with its fertile and vine crowned banks rising above the Seine uncontaminated by the pollutions poured forth thereafter into its glassy waters by a filthy capital ;—Corbeil, which, as Bologna is termed the Fat, might, assuredly, be called the Mealy ;—Corbeil, whose villas line the shore with their well trimmed avenues of limes, and here and there a shrub dipping down into the stream. The prosperous little town is neither so ornate in its environs as Richmond, nor so stately in its domiciles as Hampton Court ; but the wooded heights of St. Germain rise majestically above its suburbs ;—and, if a palace be lacking, it boasts an edifice still more unique, and almost as imposing—the celebrated Mill of Corbeil.

The antiquarian, too, finds ample employment for his researches. On the outskirts of the town, and sloping to the edge of the Seine, lies the Pleasaunce of the Tremblay, the summer palace of Queen Blanche of happy memory,—still sending up its bubbling springs with as crystalline a grace as when the stone fonts in which they are still

contained formed the bath of sovereign beauty; but devoting those lofty walls, once the precincts of a court, to the humbler but more useful purpose of ripening some hundred weight of *chasselas* grapes for a market gardener. Yet although thus strangely degraded in its destination, and having its level lawns variegated with sundry patches of oats, wheat, barley, rye, Indian corn, lucerne, French beans, and vines, according to the agricultural propensities of the cultivator, whose fertile farm is bounded by those lofty walls and entered by the stately gateways that afforded access to royalty itself,—the Tremblay retains many a scattered relic of former grandeur.

Like a waiting gentlewoman, retired from service to live upon her means in her native village, and occasionally stealing to church in a suit of paduasoy manufactured from the court train of her former lady,—here and there, in the midst of a vineyard or corn ridge, we fall upon the ornamented basin of a fountain that plays no longer; or stumble against a stone bench, half hidden among the shoots of the beech tree, under whose shade it formerly afforded a resting place to the noble saunterers of the palace. The very canal still shelters among its flowering flags and water lilies a few overgrown golden carp, glittering among the more sober-suited fishes of its waters, like the last courtiers of the place. For Queen

Blanche and her successors were, in turn, succeeded at her Pleasaunce of the Seine by nobles of high degree; nor was it until the last century that it fell into plebeian hands—

And laughing Ceres reassumed the land!

It happened, however, that, at the period immediately preceding the frightful epoch of the French Revolution, the Tremblay had brighter things to boast of than its golden carp,—purer things than even its crystal fountains. The little farm, concealed within its cosy nook, was tenanted by a worthy wight named Mathurin, whose two daughters enjoyed the envied appellation of the Roses of Corbeil. It is impossible to conceive two lovelier creatures, or two more closely resembling each other in person,—more thoroughly dissimilar in character and disposition. There was but a year's difference between them in age; there was a century's in sentiment!

Manette the elder sister, was a light, lively, gay-hearted creature, *riante* as the landscapes of Corbeil. Justine, the younger, with the same blue eyes, the same silken hair, the same trim ankle and well formed figure, was sad and sober; and the neighbours who noted among themselves her gravity of aspect, were apt to attribute it to the influence of the broken constitution of her

mother, who died of a pulmonary disorder in giving her birth. Both sisters, however, strengthened by the discretion of their deportment the high distinctions attained by their beauty; and Mathurin, although watchful over the two nymphs of the Tremblay, as a miser over his gold, was not afraid to let his daughters take their stand on market days upon the Place de Notre Dame of Corbeil, with their fair faces shaded by the wide straw hats in use among the peasants of the department of the Seine-et-Oise, to preside over the sale of the vegetable produce of his farm, and more especially over the stand of garden flowers and exotics, the pride of the gay parterres surrounding the limpid bath of the Reine Blanche. Every thing prospered with them. While the father busied himself with the cares of his farm, the daughters contrived to render it available. The barley mow and the hay rick diminished,—the beds of ranunculuses and tulips were bereft of their brilliant show; but Mathurin's long leathern purse grew heavier, his linen press was stocked; and, at length, he took his pipe at even and morning tide, without much self-reproach on the score of economy. He even made the girls partakers of his gains, and Justine had the happiness to secure from her earnings a weekly mass for the spiritual repose of her mother at the altar of the Sacré Cœur in the church of St. Spire!

Manette, however, had other objects to which to devote her superfluous wealth. Manette was young and pretty enough to be curious in the lace of her pinnars, and the lawn of her kerchief. It was observed one day, as she took her usual stand on the market place, that she exhibited a pair of long gold ear-rings under her straw hat, and that a cross of gold was suspended to the black velvet which habitually encircled her slender throat; and one or two of the most censorious of the ladies of the Faubourg, who were accustomed to exchange a few civil words with the Roses of Corbeil when they laid in their stock of mignonette-seed, turned disdainfully away on noticing this accession of finery. Mademoiselle Benoîte, indeed, the squint-eyed daughter of a retired notary at St. Germain, was heard to whisper that it was no wonder Manette of Tremblay grew so fine, now she was rowed over the river so often by young Monsieur Félix Clérivault, of the Douze Moulins; and now that young Monsieur Clérivault of the Douze Moulins found the fountains of Tremblay so refreshing during the midsummer heats.—The prudes and scandal-mongers were determined to espy mischief in the innocent coquetry of poor Manette!

Félix was a man whom, if few people loved, most people feared. Although, in every way, extrinsically endowed to win affection, and only

qualified to excite apprehension by a taciturn reserve inspiring involuntary mistrust of his temper and disposition. He was chargeable with no act of violence, no act of injustice. He was charitable, generous, humane, yet his associates one and all, refrained from making him their friend;—and from the singular motive that they felt convinced he was capable of becoming a bitter enemy.—And thus it was that few people loved Félix! He was the son of old Clérivault, the rich miller of Corbeil—but he was nothing more.

The mill—or, as it is called on the spot, the *Douze Moulins* of Corbeil (although no less a number than twenty-eight are comprehended in the one huge building, resembling, at a distance a strong fortress, rather than an humble corn-mill),—was then a recent erection—one vast wing of the building being devoted to the government service of the public hospitals of Paris, the other to the private speculations of Clérivault. At a time when all other branches of commerce were declining under the influence of the political dissensions already agitating the kingdom—and the rich silk-weavers and bronze founders of Paris were beginning to foresee a term to their prosperity,—the staff of life was not the less needed that its consumers were bent on establishing a general equalization of their rights. Bread was

wanted at Paris whether Girondin or Jacobin ruled the senate; and old Clérivault, profiting by the facilities afforded by the vicinity of the river Juigne to the spreading corn-fields of La Brie towards the provisionment of the capital, had invested a large portion of his fortune in the creation of an establishment likely to perpetuate his name, and multiply his means beyond all calculation.

His whole life had, in fact, been spent in the task of money-getting and money-sparing, and the pastime of deceiving the world as to the extent of his gains and savings. No one, not even his only son, had the most remote idea of the amount of Clérivault's property; but when it was rumoured in Corbeil that he had made overtures for an alliance between Félix and Mademoiselle de Montigny, co-heiress of the château de St. Port, the gossips of the town decided that he must have been a bolder or a richer man than they had previously imagined;—the aristocratic “de” prefixed to the name of the young lady being equivalent to the value of at least thirty thousand crowns in a marriage-contract with the son of the Miller of Corbeil. Neither the distinction it imparted, however, nor any other attraction, sufficed to overcome the opposition of Félix to the match. While Mademoiselle Benoîte and her crew were busy in computing what amount of wealth could

justify the Clérivaults in pretending to so grand a connexion, the young man explicitly declared to his father his determination to wed elsewhere !

This might have been held sufficient provocation. But when Félix came to particularise that the partner he had chosen was no other than pretty Manette, the twin Rose of Corbeil, the gardener's daughter of le Tremblay, the wrath testified by old Clérivault against his son was easy to be accounted for. The cast-off prejudices of the great usually descend to the little ; and at a time when even the peerage of France was beginning to republicanise,—when Versailles itself had declared in favour of the natural equality of the human species,—it was time for the Miller to disdain the inter-alliance of his family with that of a market-gardener ; nor could an Emperor of Germany, insulted by the determination of his son the King of the Romans to espouse the daughter of some petty baron of the Empire, have shown himself more fiercely indignant than old Clérivault.

“ I had already heard from our cousin Benoîte,” cried he, “ that it was inferred in the town no good would come of your everlasting visits to the sty of a farm yonder, over the water ;—but, look you, Master Félix ! if ever again you set foot upon the turf of the Tremblay, I will assuredly

put the width of my threshold between you and me for evermore;—ay! Sir, and marry again—(Mademoiselle de Montigny, perhaps,—why not the father as well as the son?)—and beget sons and daughters, who shall not thwart me in my old age, although they share my inheritance with my elder and more stubborn child.”

“ You cannot do better, Sir,” replied Félix, without moving a muscle of his handsome but impassive countenance. “ Although you oppose my choice, I am far from inclined to find fault with yours. Marry Mademoiselle de Montigny—disinherit me if you will. I have still two strong arms, and as strong a heart, to enable me to get my own living and pursue my own inclinations.”

And Clérivault, aware of the obstinacy of his son’s resolves, gave over the case for lost; and even made a solemn progress to the Château de St. Port, to offer his apologies to the family of Montigny, and tender the retractation of his proposals.

Yet, in spite of this resignation and these formal measures, all hopes of alliance was not at an end. Old Clérivault had an abettor in his projects on whom he little calculated. He could not be more firmly determined that Félix should never become the husband of the gardener’s daughter, than Manette that she would never

become the wife of the Miller's son!—No! it was *not* for *him* that she had added the offending trinkets to her costume, or folded the snowy lawn upon her bosom—it was not for him that she loitered by the way on the road from le Tremblay to the market place—it was not for him that she ensconced her well-turned foot into slippers of Spanish morocco to dance upon the green sward at the annual fête of Saint Etienne at Essonne. There were other attractions at the Mill of Corbeil than the homage of Félix Clérivault; and Mathurin's daughter, so inaccessible to the addresses of one who wooed her with the stern gravity of a Spanish hidalgo, or rather, with the jealous but impassioned tenderness of an Orosmanes, had given her heart with very little asking to young Valentine, the son of Charlet, a poor ferryman of Corbeil!

As it has been already observed, the prejudices of the great are eagerly adopted by the little; and the rich miller could not express himself more vehemently against his son's attachment to the daughter of the market-gardener, than did the market-gardener, in his turn, on hearing his daughter's engagement to the son of a ferryman of the Seine. Clérivault wished to marry Félix to the high-born Clarisse de Montigny; Mathurin to marry Manette to the wealthy Félix. Clérivault threatened to disinherit his son—Mathurin

threatened to horsewhip his daughter ; and when on the evening succeeding the general *éclaircissement*, Félix rowed over to le Tremblay, and, having fastened his boat to the usual stump, made his way towards a stone bench among the acacias where often at the same hour he had found the two daughters of Mathurin sitting together—now talking, now listening—sometimes to each other, sometimes to the gurgling of the springs among the grass, or the whistling of the blackbirds in the groves of St. Germain,—he was bitterly taxed by Manette with the indignity he had been the means of drawing upon her endurance.

“ It is a cruel thing of you, Monsieur Félix,” said she, “ to persist in persecuting me thus after I have again and again told you that were you Count of Corbeil, or the King of France himself, I would never be your wife !—And now you have provoked my father to misuse me (the first time he ever breathed a harsh word against either of his children !) I do but detest you the more !”

“ Hate me, and welcome !” said Félix, in an unaltered voice. “ I have heard you say as much before, Manette, and been nothing moved. But never till to-day—never till from your father’s lips, this morning, did I learn that you preferred another—that you stooped to bestow the love denied to me upon yonder beggar, the son of a

beggar—the hireling drudge of my father’s mill !
—What in heaven—what on earth—do you see to move your affection in such a fellow as Valentin ?—Answer me, Manette, what do you see to like in Valentin ?”—

“ That if he were rich, like yourself, Monsieur Félix Clérivault, he would not always be thinking of riches, and giving the name of beggar as a word of reproach, to others less fortunate than himself ; Valentin has the heart of a prince !”

“ Truly a ragged prince, and with a precious cabin for his palace !”—retorted the Miller’s son, instantly justifying her accusation : “ as you will find when you take your place yonder in Charlet’s hovel, among the ten half-fed, half-clothed brats who call him father !”

“ And who, even for that scanty food and scanty clothing, are indebted to the labour of Valentin !”—added Manette, with firmness ; “ of Valentin, who, when his work at the mill is over, comes to his father’s hut with a smile upon his face and a song upon his lips ; and, instead of grumbling and murmuring that his limbs are aching with toil, sits down cheerfully to his osier-weaving or mat-work ; or, during the summer season, rows off as stoutly as though his arms had not done a turn of work through the day, to cut reeds for the thatchers or the tile-makers. And for what does he labour ?—To lay up hoards

for himself, or to purchase the means of selfish pleasure?—No, Monsieur Félix, no!—to get bread for his paralytic mother—raiment for his brothers and sisters—rent to requite your own purse proud father for the use of the miserable hut you hold so cheap. Proud as you are of your fortune, your very means have been swelled by his industry.”

“Manette!” whispered the gentle Justine, laying her hand imploringly upon her sister’s shoulder, “you know not how great an injury you may be doing Valentin by this violence.”

“I understand you!” replied Manette, aloud, “although you are afraid to speak out. You mean that Monsieur Félix will be a powerful and malicious enemy to him. Courage, courage, sister! Valentin, by the sweat of his brow and the labour of his hands, earns wages from the Miller of Corbeil; but he is not therefore the slave of either old Clérivault or his son. There is nothing to fear from Valentin; nor any reason why I should not acquaint the gentleman, who is base enough to taunt him with beggary, that I would rather make one in the hovel by the river side among its merry inmates and the warm hearts that would welcome me so kindly—than play the lady in the cold narrow-minded family of Clérivault, where the only cheerful sound is the clack of their own mill!”

By this time the soul of Félix was overflowing with rage. He ground his teeth for rage as he thought of Valentin!—But he uttered not a syllable.—His wrath was silent as it was deadly; and the stillness was only interrupted by the sobs of Manette, whose petulance, as usual, exhausted itself in tears.

“Father!” cried she, suddenly starting up from Justine’s pacifying embraces, as the footsteps of Mathurin were heard approaching the bench on which they sat, “I beseech you, command Monsieur Félix Clérivault to quit this place. You explained to me this morning the wickedness of children presuming to disobey their parents: you will not, surely, encourage a son to rebel against his father?—Old Clérivault has laid his injunctions on Félix to visit le Tremblay no more. You have pride, too, father;—surely, surely, you will not stoop to have it said that you laid snares to seduce a raw inexperienced boy into marriage with your daughter?”

“And *who* will dare to say so!”—ejaculated the young man, trembling with repressed rage at the epithets bestowed upon him.

“Your own kinswoman, Mam’selle Benoîte, has said so a thousand times.”

“Mam’selle Benoîte is a prating fool!” cried old Mathurin; and young Clérivault saw no cause to dispute the assertion.

"But you cannot surely, my dear father, wish Monsieur Félix to get into trouble by his visits to the Tremblay ? said Justine, mildly—a question to which the gardener-farmer found it so difficult to reply, that he leant down, on pretext of caressing the shaggy-looking cur which was accustomed to lag at his heels, rather than venture on a direct answer.

"And how is my father to hear of them ?"—demanded Clérivault, haughtily bending his brow.

"Thus !" replied Justine, pointing through the dusk, now gathering round them, to the approaching figure of a man bending under the weight of a sack of meal ; who, on putting down his burthen, and raising his head, as he proceeded to wipe his streaming brows, presented to their view the homely features but prepossessing countenance of Valentin ; while Charlet's son, startled to find his young master thus apparently domesticated with Mathurin and his daughters, yet in no wise daunted by his presence, cheerfully saluted the party.

"What are you doing here, Sir ?"—demanded Félix, in an angry voice.

"Obeying the orders of the overseer, Monsieur Félix," replied the young man ; "who bade me bring over——"

"Is this a time for doing your mill-work ?"—interrupted Félix. "I shall represent to-morrow,

to my father, that you defer the execution of his business till after-hours, in order to suit your own whims and convenience."

"You will represent what you please, Sir," answered Valentin. "But one honest man's word is as good as another's; and Monsieur Bernardin, the overseer, has known me too well from a boy upwards as a truth-teller, and fair-dealer, not to credit my assurance, that every minute of my morning's time was spent in my duty to my employer. If I have pushed the boat over to Tremblay, to deliver to Monsieur Mathurin his meal this evening, instead of to-morrow morning as I was directed, it is only because I desired to offer him the *bonsoir*, and my respects to the young ladies."

"Your respects and your salutations are not wanted here, my lad," growled Mathurin. "If you had brought me the couple of crowns I have had to score up against your father for milk and meal furnished to your family, you would have done something more to the purpose." And Mathurin, excited by the desire of saying a vexatious thing to the pauper who had presumed to lift his eyes to his pretty Manette, renounced the generous intention of his better nature to make a free gift to the needy family of the overflowings of his cruise of plenty.

"Do not fancy I am come empty-handed," said Valentin, mildly, but drawing up with conscious

pride as he tendered the payment of two crowns to the more prosperous farmer; and Manette's heart beat till it was ready to burst her bosom, for joy that her lover was able to redeem himself from humiliation in his rival's presence. "If I have delayed thus long, Monsieur Mathurin, it is that grievous sickness has arisen in my family from the damps of the season,—Monsieur Clérvault's workmen have neglected to repair the roof of our hut, according to his covenant. But remember that, although the cost of drugs and doctors may have kept us in your debt, it has not caused me to break my word. I promised you payment at midsummer, and Saturday next is the eve of St. John."

"Good,—Valentin, good!" replied Mathurin, jerking the money into his pocket, and ashamed of the meanness into which he had been betrayed.

"You are an honest lad; and I have nought to say against you in your way. But your way is not mine, and I do not intend to make it so. Henceforward I shall beg Monsieur Bernardin to choose some other of his mill-lads to do what business may chance to stand between us; and charge my old friend Charlet to lay his injunctions on yourself not to be gadding about upon idle errands, of evenings, or, at least, not upon premises of mine."

"You have said enough, Master Mathurin," answered Valentin, involuntarily glancing towards

the two girls, who stood overcome with grief and embarrassment, leaning on each other, under the acacia trees; "I am well aware to whom I am indebted for this sudden change of welcome, and shall take an opportunity to thank the tale-bearer who, for some time past, has been base enough to play the spy upon my actions."

"*You lie!*—" vociferated Félix, on whom the accusing looks of Valentin were now directed. "You lie like a dog!——"

"Coward that you are, in daring to use such words to *me!*" cried the young man, suddenly smiting a violent blow upon his own breast; "when you know that I cannot raise my hand against you so long as the bread eaten by my family is provided by your father's wages."

"You have also their beggary to thank for screening your insolence from chastisement," said the contemptuous Félix. "And as you seem to be in no condition to play the hero, beware, in future, how you assume the braggart."

"Valentin—dear Valentin!" exclaimed Justine, throwing herself before young Clérivault, to intercept the spring which she perceived Valentin on the point of making upon his person, "remember your poor mother, remember your sick sisters."

"Let me go!" cried he, struggling with the silent embrace of Manette, which not even her fa-

ther's presence sufficed to check when she saw her lover on the eve of rushing into violence—the inevitable source of ruin to himself and his family. “Let me go ;—let me not live to have it said of me, that I dared not defend myself against the insults of a villain !” Then dashing forwards, and again, as suddenly, checking himself, he burst into tears, and covered his face with his hands while he exclaimed, “He is right !—I *dare* not strike him, —I dare not lay hands on the son of the Miller of Corbeil !—I was born too poor to indulge in the sense of justice and honour. The walls that shelter us are his father's walls,—the food we eat is derived from *him*. Father—mother—brothers—sisters !—this is the hardest thing I have had to bear for your sake !”

“Never mind him, Valentin !—be of good cheer, dear, dear Valentin !” sobbed Manette ; her sensitive nature excited to its utmost pitch of violence by his distresses. “Let him be as rich and as audacious as he will, I hold him but a dastard and a beggar !—From me he will obtain nothing, Valentin ;—nothing but scorn and detestation. Poor as you are—so poor will I be ! Despise you as they may—*I* honour you,—*I* revere you,—*I* love you !—My father may drive me forth,—my friends disown me ; but they have urged me on to defiance by their misdoings towards *you*.—Valentin,

dear Valentin, hear me,—hear your wife, and leave this man to the rebukes of his own conscience.”

Sad was the scene that ensued upon this open violation of parental authority. But Valentin had not the affliction of seeing the woman he loved savagely entreated by her enraged father; for while Mathurin was engaged in driving back his daughter to the farm and locking her into her chamber, Félix and himself were entwined in a deadly struggle,—a struggle that left him, for a few seconds, breathless and senseless on the turf; for the athletic Clérivault was as much the superior of the ill-nourished, over-tasked Valentin, in personal strength, as in worldly endowments. Young Baptiétret, a hind employed upon the farm, attracted to the spot by the tumult of the scuffle, proceeded to raise him from the ground, while Félix hastily made off towards Corbeil. But when Valentin recovered the effects of his stunning fall sufficiently to comprehend what had passed, and to feel that he had been engaged in an altercation with his master's son which would probably end in the ruin of his whole household, he wrung his hands for very bitterness.

“Would that I were dead!” he ejaculated, as he took his way back to his father's ferry-boat. “Mathurin has sworn to bestow his daughter upon another. Monsieur Clérivault will eject my mo-

ther from her habitation when he learns what has occurred. My intemperance will seal the fate of my family, without obtaining me the hand of Manette.—Would ! would that I were dead ! Better be in my grave than thus a burden to myself and all the world.”—

“Be of good cheer, Valentin,” cried the lad Bapti  ret, who had followed him, and was aiding him to unmoor his boat. “Ma’m selle Manette loves you in spite of them all. Ma’m selle Manette has promised that she will one day be your wife !”

“No !—no wife—no house—no hope—no rest !—I was born with the curse of God upon my soul !”—uttered the ferryman’s son, looking up to the sky (where the faint flushes of a summer storm were already streaming,) as if in impious reproach to the Omnipotent who had created a wretch so miserable.—“I was born to eat the bread of toil and bitterness ;—what matters it that such an outcast should cease to live ?”

And it came to pass that every petulant word uttered by Valentin to the farm-lad Bapti  ret during that brief colloquy, was eventually inscribed in the judicial archives of the country, with the view of throwing light upon the incidents following the quarrel of that fatal night !—Old Charlet’s son never again set foot upon the turf of le Tremblay !

Valentin was mistaken, however, in supposing that his dispute with Félix would insure his dismissal from the Mill of Corbeil. Either old Clérivault saw no cause for displeasure in his conduct, or Félix had generously or perhaps, discreetly forborne to prefer a complaint against him :—when, at the ringing of the work-bell the following morning, he presented himself as usual among the men, not a word of remark was made on the subject by Bernardin the overseer. Valentin had been cutting rushes on the river from earliest daylight, in order to repair to the best of his own abilities the dilapidated roof of the hovel, from whence he so much dreaded to witness the ejection of his family ; and, heart-sick with labour and fasting, was scarcely able to support the struggle of his feelings on ascertaining that his rashness had not been the means of immediate injury to his sick and feeble mother. In the course of the day he had still stronger evidence that no displeasure existed against him in the mind of the Clérivaults ; for a trust-worthy messenger being needed to carry over to La Brie the copy of a contract of sale, for signature, to one of the most extensive corn-growers of the district, Valentin was chosen for the office,—the usual factor being absent on pressing business at the market of Melun. Having received his instructions, he accordingly departed ; and, as it was impossible for him to re-

turn to Corbeil till a late hour at night, it was settled that he should tender an account of his commission to Monsieur Bernardin the following morning, when he was to be at the mill half an hour previous to his usual time.

At the usual time, however, the work-bell rang, but no Valentin made his appearance; and the young men in Clérivault's employ began to joke among themselves, swearing that the sober Valentin must have been guilty of some excess, and detained on the road. At a late hour, Bernardin dispatched one of the boys to Charlet's cottage to make inquiries, but still no Valentin had been heard of.

Before evening, they knew all; but the all was indeed no trivial matter. Before evening, the public authorities were summoned, and a *procès-verbal* was drawn up, specifying the finding of the body of the unfortunate Valentin, suspended by his own handkerchief to a tree in the Forest of Sénart.—*He had destroyed himself.*—It was noticed with sympathy by all, that throughout the investigation of the case, young Clérivault, who could not but tax himself as the unintentional cause of the misfortune, was present, pale as death, and completely overpowered by his feelings.

But if Félix sorrowed for the departed, what was the affliction of her whom he had so dearly loved—of those who so dearly loved him?—what the

agony of Manette when she knew that he for whom she would have sacrificed all, had incurred the guilt of the suicide?—*She* did not hold him guilty, except, indeed, in leaving her to struggle alone with the troubles of the world; and as soon as the daylight dawned, on the day succeeding that when the body of Valentin was discovered in the forest, and after the usual forms deposited by the Maréchaussée of Corbeil in his father's hovel previously to interment, she set out alone for Charlet's cottage,—to comfort the living,—to mourn over the dead!

It was a grievous sight,—that miserable hut standing alone in the midst of the green meadows on the borders of the Seine, like a thing abandoned to the mercy of nature;—that miserable hut whose prop was now reft away—that refuge for those who had none left to succour them, none left to minister to their wants, or wipe away their tears!—Mathurin's daughter lifted the latch as gently as though it were possible that any under Charlet's roof could at such a season be sleeping; and with the calmness of despair, entered the house of mourning.

And mournful, indeed, was the spectacle!—There, on the only pallet, lay the paralytic mother hiding her face in the clothes, that she might not look upon the disfigured corpse of her first-born,—the mattress affording the customary bed

to the children having been already carried out and sold by the poor ferryman, to secure the means of a decent burial for his boy !—And there lay the livid body of Valentin stretched upon the very rushes which his own hand had cut for so different a purpose, while his little brothers and sisters, deprived of their rest, and terrified, and hungry, were huddled together in a corner, staring with wonder at all that was passing. Charlet, usually so reckless amid his wants and misfortunes, sat with his head drooping on his breast, and scarcely raised his eyes on Manette's entrance ; nor was it till she went close up to him, and kneeled at his feet, and called him " father," and reviled herself as the cause of the evil, that the unhappy man seemed moved to consciousness.

" Had *he* lived, I should have been your daughter," said Manette, hiding her weeping face upon his knees, " and then, all I had would have been yours. Accept it *now*, Charlet, for his sake," she continued, placing in his hand a small bag containing the amount of hers and Justine's earnings. " Accept it now, when it can be useful ; for to *me*, worldly goods are henceforward vain." And she wept long and bitterly, while the little children, who had been taught by Valentin to love her, crept forward and clung to her gown, and whispered to her to be comforted, for that their brother was surely with God !

“Yes, he *is* with God!”—said the broken-hearted old man, in a hoarse voice. “He whose loss renders these little ones worse than fatherless, and gives so bitter a pang to the poor grey-headed parents to whom he never, never gave pain before, *must* be with God. My boy may appear at the tribunal of Grace with the stain of self-murder on his soul. He, who never injured mortal man, may have been moved to lift his hand against his own precious life. But Heaven judges us not as we judge each other;—Heaven witnessed the cares, the trials, the struggles of my blessed Valentin, and noted the maddening brain and breaking heart of the proud pauper—the tender son—the good brother—the good Christian;—and Heaven will forgive him!”

“Why, why did he forsake us?” ejaculated Mathurin’s daughter, rising from her knees and tottering towards the body. “Oh, Valentin! Valentin! why did you forsake me?” and lifting up the cloth with which the pious care of the father had covered the face of the dead, she imprinted a fervent kiss upon the lips of him who should have been her husband.

At that moment her father and sister, having missed her from the farm, and readily conjecturing her route, entered the cottage in search of Manette. But Mathurin’s displeasure against the deceased was over now, and instead of expressing

dissatisfaction at his daughter's proceedings, he not only advanced with tearful eyes to sprinkle holy water on the body of her ill-starred lover, but asked permission of Charlet to follow it to the grave. And when the remains of the warm and true Valentin were deposited in the pauper's trench of the churchyard of St. Germain, they were transported thither on the shoulders of his comrades, and followed by so vast a concourse of his fellow-workmen and friends, and the incense of their affliction was as that of a burnt-offering calculated to propitiate the mercy of God towards the suicide.

It is probable that a catastrophe so lamentable would have produced a greater sensation and elicited a closer scrutiny in a little town so uneventful in its history as Corbeil, but that the still fiercer disasters of the French Revolution had already begun in the capital; and soon afterwards, Félix secretly took his departure to join the armies of the Republic.

"I knew it would be thus," murmured the gentle Justine, as she sauntered along the river-walk of her father's garden looking towards the Mill of Corbeil, when intelligence of young Clérivault's departure transpired in the town. "I was sure he could not remain here, haunting the same spots and communing with the same associates *as before*. He is right to fly. Félix has nothing more to do

at Corbeil; his penance must be accomplished elsewhere.—Miserable, miserable Félix!—What thoughts, what recollections accompany him in his flight;—what griefs, what terrors have been undermining his health? Yet Manette, who so dearly loved Valentin, has seen and suspected nothing of all this;—while I, *I* so long, so hopelessly devoted to Félix, discerned his conscience-struck affliction from the first moment I saw him gazing yonder from the shore on Charlet's hovel!—The Forest of Sénart,—the Forest of Sénart!—Oh! that I could free myself from the imagination of that scene,—that fatal, fatal night!—No sooner am I left alone than involuntarily the whole black business rises before me. I fancy their encounter,—I seem to hear their quarrel—I seem to see the struggle in which Valentin must have fallen a victim, ere the dreadful idea presented itself to Félix of making him pass for a self-murderer! Appearances avouched the imputation,—appearances deceived the officers of justice,—deceived his comrades, his master, his father, his friends, his affianced wife,—but they did not deceive *me*; for it was not on Valentin's life, but on the well-doing of Félix Clérivault that my happiness was pledged. And, oh! how have I watched over his repentance, his despair!—Had he triumphed in his wickedness, I should have learned to hate him; but to see him self-convicted,—penitent,—wretch-

ed,—although thrice secure from discovery! Miserable, miserable Félix!—Driven from his home by the clinging curse of reminiscences henceforward to be attached to his birth-place—Oh! when will he venture to return to Corbeil?”

Years rolled on; old Clérivault had already resigned the presidency of the mill to Bernardin, the overseer; and the fine domain of St. Germain having become national property by the emigration of the noble family with whom it was hereditary, the Château was purchased by the assignats of the Miller of Corbeil. Thither, with a scanty household, he retired; and there, uncared for and alone, falling gradually into a state of imbecility, it was a gratification to him when tottering round the lawns whose beauty he was incapable of appreciating, to be accosted by the younger daughter of his neighbour Mathurin, with inquiries whether tidings had reached him from his son, and how it fared with the armies of France. But the old man's answer was ever the same:—“The armies of France were triumphant,—but no tidings from his son!” Great names were beginning to arise from obscurity in the annals of the country,—Lannes, Victor, Bernadotte, Murat, Duroc, Berthier, Suchet, Soult.—A mighty soldier had conquered to its banners the eagle-plumed ensign of victory; but no conjecture enabled Clérivault to discover under what designation Félix had either

fallen on the field of honour, or was struggling onwards in the career of fame. It was rumoured in the town that once, when a brigade on its march to join the army of the Sambre-and-Meuse halted at Essonne, a superior officer was seen galloping back to the high road in the dusk of the evening from the portal of the church of St. Spire, where, in the *tronc des pauvres* adjoining the mausoleum of Count Haymon of Corbeil, a bank-bill of considerable amount was found on the succeeding morning. But none could say that the stranger was Félix Clérivault; and if indeed he, the suns of Egypt and Italy had "written strange defeatures in his face."

At length (it was at the triumphant epoch of the recognition of *le soldat heureux* as Emperor of France) the Miller of Corbeil, long sickly and doting, was finally gathered to his rest; when a public advertisement having been legally circulated by the authorities of the department and the sale of the property subsequently announced,—the heir,—the long-absent, the half-forgotten Félix,—appeared on the spot, in the person of one of those eminent generals whose names had long been rife in the mouths of the inhabitants of Corbeil, and their destinies commended to Heaven by the prayers of their fellow-countrymen. But, even when, shortly afterwards, the equipage of General Le— was seen one fine summer evening entering the iron gates of the park of St. Germain, the no-

tion of the presence of one of the heroes of Marengo, of the Pyramids, of Austerlitz, seemed to have superseded all recollection of Félix Clérivault. The villagers gazed on the noble person of the handsome, grave, middle-aged soldier whose head was more than slightly silvered by the toils of war; and saw no traces of the petulant youth they had been accustomed to watch, eighteen years before, crossing the river to Tremblay to laugh and jest with the Roses of Corbeil.

To *his* eyes, meanwhile, the season and the scene were much as when he quitted them. *He* had become a hero,—a statesman;—Europe was familiar with his name, and his voice had obtained weight in the councils of France. His port was now erect and stately,—his step firm and measured,—his voice stern and commanding; he had learned to control the desires and passions of others,—*he* had learned to control his own. Nothing in *him* but was altered. But *there* rolled the same blue Seine,—there smiled the same vineyards,—there stood the Mill of Corbeil,—there rose the woods of St. Germain,—there the chimneys of the farm of Le Tremblay;—there, far below in the meadows, crumbled the ruins of a hovel the hut of the ferryman,—and there,—*there*, in the distant horizon, *gloomed the Forest of Sénart*.

And, lo! unsilenceably resounded in his ears the mandate, “Thou shalt do no murder!”

It was some comfort to him to learn that

Mathurin was no more, and the family of Charlet the ferryman dispersed and forgotten. "And the Roses of Corbeil?" inquired General Le——, in a low voice, as accompanied by the game keeper of St. Germain, on the evening of his arrival, he pursued his way along the terrace, gazing through the grey evening light upon the open country.

"Mathurin's elder daughter, mon Général, she who married the young farmer named Baptiétret, is the mother of ten fine children, and still living at the Tremblay," said the *garde-de-chasse*. "Her sister Justine, poor soul! has become a Sister of Charity."

Hastily proceeding in their walk, the opening of the upper avenue of the Château towards the vineyards brought them in sight of a fine, comely looking countrywoman driving two cows, and accompanied by a lout of a farming boy and two healthy little girls, with untrimmed heads and dirty faces.

"*Tiens, voilà justement Ma'ame Baptiétret et ses enfans!*" continued the gamekeeper. "*Ma'ame Baptiétret! Holà Ma'ame Baptiétret! voici Monsieur le Général, qui s'informe de vous et de votre famille.*"

And General Le—— found himself perforce required to stand and receive the awkward courtesies of the great fat countrywoman and listen to

her history of her father's dying of an asthma, and her own happy match with Baptiérét the cow boy! "*Brave garçon si jamais il en fût, et bien aimé de ce pauvre Valentin. Monsieur le Général se rappelle sans doute, ce pauvre Valentin ?*"

Alas! what else but the remembrance of Valentin had kept him so long an alien from his father's hearth,—so long an exile from home?—And it was for the woman before him that he had borne so much,—incurred so much,—sinned so greatly, so irreparably!—Poor feeble human nature!—Poor murdered Valentin!—

But the trial thus voluntarily encountered proved too much for Félix; and, after remaining a few hours longer at St. Germain, General Le—— quitted for the last time a spot abounding in soul-harrowing reminiscences—reminiscences rendering vain his toils of honour, his career of glory.

For the brief remainder of his life, the fine mansion of St. Germain remained uninhabited. But the grave of General Le—— is now at Ehrenbreitstein, his monument in the Panthéon, and his property, having been bequeathed to the foundation of a military hospital, otherwise invested. Strangers abide at the château,—a company of speculators have assumed the direction of the mill of Corbeil; and nothing remains

to commemorate the past, but the clear fountains of the Tremblay, and in the churchyard of the village of St. Germain,—a grave whose accusing voice will be heard by the guilty soul throughout the fearful stillness of eternity !

THE CHAMPION.



THE CHAMPION.

" Since he has got the jewel that I loved,
I'll not deny him any thing I have."

Merchant of Venice.

THERE was not a fairer face than that of Lady Mildred Stanley to be seen beneath the jewelled coifs and embroidered veils gracing the high festivals of the court of Westminster, in those days of tranquillity, which, on the accession of the seventh Henry, marked the extinction of the feuds of the two roses. A close family connexion with the newly created Earl of Derby, husband to the Lady Margaret Beaufort and step-father to the reigning sovereign, had procured for the beautiful Mildred a place in the household of her majesty: and although the impoverished condition of the British nobles bore testimony to the fatal prolongation of the wars of York and Lancaster, and forbade those luxurious indulgences and regal splendours which enlivened the succeeding reign,

still, even in the dullest of courts, revels must arise to welcome the ambassadors of foreign potentates ; the royal banqueting-hall must occasionally be paced with fairy-footed measures, and the royal tilt-yard derive animation from the smiles of the noble, the fair, and the gay.

Unfortunately for the Lady Mildred, she chanced to possess, in addition to these three qualifications so precious in the estimation of womankind, a fourth endowment which, if in some degree valuable even in the eyes of her own sex, is often doubly and trebly important in those of the more calculating gender ;—she was *rich* !—an orphan—an heiress—and consequently a ward to her sovereign lord the king ; her fair hand and broad lands lying at his absolute disposal,—and her heart—but what availed it to *have* a heart under such circumstances ? The air of the court was any thing but propitious to the cultivation and expansion of its better impulses ; and it was fortunate indeed that they should be nipped and withered in the bud, for the despotic will of the House of Tudor, which now exercised unlimited power over her destinies, would have experienced little scruple in lopping their most luxuriant growth, and condemning all their sweet sensibilities to the cold formalities of mere courtiership.

Her kinswoman, Margaret the saintly and erudite Countess of Richmond, apparently conscious

of the dangers which might arise to the lovely Mildred from any indulgence in the softer emotions of her sex, had at an early age devoted her vigilance to repress the impulses of the heart of Mildred by a diligent cultivation of the powers of her mind. Having endowed the youthful heiress with the accomplishments rare in those days, of reading and writing, the prudent mother of the crafty Henry now took especial care that the former attainment should ensure a familiar acquaintance with legends of the saints, instead of the erotic elegies of Alain Chartier; while the latter was exclusively devoted to the transcription of missals and canticles, to be tendered by herself as offerings from the beautiful Mildred to the sanctuaries of the college she had recently endowed in the university of Cambridge.

Often and often did Lady Mildred cast a longing eye from the vellum scrolls which taxed her diligence under the watchful superintendence of the venerable countess, towards the embroidering frames and webs of tapestry, around which her fair companions of the royal household were gathered in cheerful groups; beguiling their light labours with the still lighter *virelais* and *romans* of the provençal minstrels;—or the recitation of such poetical fictions as Chaucer had already bestowed on the rude language of their own country, and Ariosto was beginning to weave into immor-

tal garlands with the golden thread of a softer lyre and the exquisite flowers of a more genial clime. She longed to listen to their gay ditties; she longed to join in their wild speculations touching the gorgeous and polished festivities gracing the court of the youthful King of France;—she had no vocation for Christian martyrdoms,—no ear for the metrical barbarisms of monkish canticles.

Her feelings were allured to more touching measures and more humane sympathies; and although perhaps the instructions of the learned Lady Margaret availed in some degree to strengthen her mind and develope her character, they had not the smallest tendency to harden her heart.

She had learned indeed to despise the overweening anxiety which distracted her young associates touching the fashioning of a new kirtle, or the adjustment of a new wimple; but there was a fund of natural tenderness concealed within the depths of Lady Mildred Stanley's bosom, which frustrated all hope of rendering her either a prude or a devotee.

Meanwhile the worthy countess, who, with all her wisdom and erudition was as blind as a mole in the sublunary affairs of life, felt convinced that the learning and sensibility of her beautiful neophyte bore a most miraculous testimony to her own powers of perception; and nothing could exceed

her amazement when—having selected that fair summer morning which marked the completion of Lady Mildred's seventeenth year, and the awful stillness of her own Oriel chamber, to communicate to the royal ward that a contract had been signed and sealed by his majesty, bestowing her person and estates in marriage on Sir Lionel Sudeley of Deerehurst, in reward for good and faithful service by him done and achieved upon the auspicious field of Bosworth—the intelligence was received with a burst of tears, such as had never yet been bestowed by her pupil upon the most doleful mischance of the most suffering saint of the calendar.

But although this sudden vehemence of lamentation might appear unaccountable to the lofty and severe apprehensions of the rigid countess, the world in general may be led to sympathize in Lady Mildred's despair, by an acknowledgment that the said serviceable statesman and warrior was in fact a grey-beard adherent of the Lancastrian cause ; and as ill-qualified to become the bridegroom of a blooming heiress, as if the orisons of her devout kinswoman had resuscitated St. Lawrence himself from his gridiron to undertake that honourable office.

Vain were the representations of Lady Mildred, that she would willingly devote herself to the cloister, and her fortunes to the royal treasury,

in preference to such a sacrifice. Her learned patroness affected to regard, in this instance, the will of her son and sovereign as superior even to the interests of the state or the claims of the church, and passive obedience as the first of Christian virtues. Nor did the eager appeal of the reluctant bride to the interference of the queen-consort prosper better. Elizabeth, who had found her personal abhorrence utterly unavailing against the early apportionment of her own hand in marriage to her uncle Richard—the crookback—the condemned of nature—the murderer of her infant brothers; and who, in her subsequent state alliance, had learned nothing from the arbitrary schooling of her royal partner but lessons of female subjection and humility, was astonished to discover the mere possibility of resistance to his will.

But after admonishing her weeping maid of honour of the necessity of patience and resignation, and advising implicit obedience to King Henry's mandate, she managed to breathe a consolatory whisper in raising the suppliant from her knees, which at once sufficed to dry the bitter tears on the cheek of Lady Mildred Stanley.

By what feminine instinct the queen had contrived to discover the excellent qualities concealed beneath the repellent exterior of Sir Lionel it is unnecessary to inquire. Suffice it, that her

commendations of his noble nature, his enlightened mind and generous character, were fully confirmed by the future experience of his wife ; and that from the hour in which she stood by his side at the high altar of Westminster, in the presence of the assembled court (the gloomy Henry himself deigning to bestow the hand of his ward upon his decrepit favourite, while his daughters, the future queens of France and Scotland, supported her train of cloth gold during the ceremony) to that which beheld her bending in unaffected grief over his death bed, Mildred found no occasion to regret the selection of the king, the predilection of the queen, or her own submission to the royal decree.

Sometimes, indeed, in one of those idle caprices of woman's fancy which intervene in a life of luxury, and arise from the cloying gratification of every frivolous desire, she was tempted to repine at the preference evinced by Sir Lionel for his fair park and green woodlands on the Severn side ; marvelling that he should so seldom wish to exchange the goodly pastures of his hunting seat at Deerehurste for the splendid pageantries of the court and the gloomy towers of the abbey of Tewkesbury for the light pinnacles and fretted aisles of the aulic church of Westminster.

Nay more than once, when the wintry fogs of the Severn hung drearily over the battlements of

Deerehurste Court and the Malvern hills were tipped with snow, the lovely bride became sufficiently infected by these splenetic omens to fancy that her veteran lord was only averse to her participation in the pleasures of the court, inasmuch as he was apprehensive her roving eye might be attracted by the graces of some younger knight, moving in the stately measures of the Pavon, or reining in his charger amid the trumpet stirred excitement of the tournament. But these fits of feminine contrariety were of rare occurrence. Mildred, amid the even current of her uneventful days, sailed calmly along the stream of time;—pure in heart, contented in mind,—absorbed in the pursuits of womanly benevolence and womanly industry,—and experiencing her first real affliction in the loss of her aged lord, her considerate and cheerful companion, her forbearing and unfailing friend.

Early in the days of her widowhood—those weary days which she passed in tears of self-re-
crimination, wandering beneath the shade of the long avenues of hoary elms connecting the park of Deerehurste with the shelving banks of the Severn—Lady Mildred had occasion to recognize the injustice of her former suspicions touching her husband's motive for alienating himself from a life of courtiership. The necessary perusal of his secret papers revealed to her in its true light the

character of that sovereign from whose service he had gradually striven to estrange himself; and to expose the selfish rapacity of Henry, and that singular ingratitude and recklessness of heart, which shortly afterwards exhibited itself to the whole world in the condemnation of his faithful and valuable servant,—her own beloved kinsman, Sir William Stanley. But other thoughts and other feelings were mingled with the sorrowful self-accusations of the youthful widow. Sir Lionel had not only bequeathed to her sole inheritance his own family estates in addition to those of her ancestral house; his gorgeous plate and goodly hangings; his armoury and weaponing for the levy of one thousand horse; his caskets of ruby, diamond, and other carcanets and jewels of woman's gear; but had bestowed upon her, in his dying hour, certain parting counsels of very singular import.

“ My Mildred,” said he, as with closed eyes, and a brow already moistened with the dews of death, he pressed her trembling hand tenderly between his own, “ thou hast been to me the truest, and gentlest, and most sweetly submissive of wives, and the good saints forbid that I should selfishly seek to debar thee from bestowing on some worthier man the happiness thou hast so lavishly showered on my declining years. Many will seek thee, Mildred—many will aspire to thy

hand : some for thy beauty, some for thy wealth's sake. But in thy second nuptials, my beloved, mate thee according to thine own age, thine own degree, and thine own inclining ; for albeit thou hast scarcely yet overpassed the first blush of girlhood, thy heart is too pure and thy spirit too sage to lead thee to any choice which would dishonour my ashes in the grave."

And the perfect sincerity of the good Sir Lionel in these admonitions was fully confirmed by the tenor of his testamentary dispositions. Lady Mildred was not only left in absolute control over her splendid dowry and its reversions, but was addressed in this solemn document with the same tender counsels and commendations which had been bestowed on her by her expiring lord in presence of his assembled vassals and nearest kinsmen. The latter indeed were few in number, —including only a Shropshire esquire of the same name, shrewdly suspected of having turned a covetous eye towards the fair park of Deerehurst; his cousin, Mathias Sudely the gray headed lay prior of the monastery of Tewkesbury ; and his distant kinsman, the young Lord Storford of the Holms.

Of these worthies the second was selected, as much by the preference of the survivor as by the ancient friendship of the testator, to be the bosom-councillor of the youthful widow, who

already declared her intention of taking up her rest for the remainder of her days in those secluded halls which had witnessed the happiness of her wedded life,—whose green pastures bordered upon those of the abbey park,—and whence she could hourly behold the towers of that holy shrine where masses would be offered throughout all succeeding ages for the blameless soul of her beloved Sir Lionel.

Nor did time effect any visible change in the intentions and demeanour of the lovely widow. The good Brother Mathias—who made it his daily duty month after month succeeding his kinsman's dissolution, to turn the head of his pacing mule towards the avenue of Deerehurste, in order to render an account to the Lady Mildred of the progress effected in the stately tomb house she had commanded to be erected over the entrance of the Sudely vault—could discover no alteration in the rigid folds of her wimple of widowhood, or the pale immobility of the fair brow it overshadowed.

The dreary winter days returned in due progress and wrought no recurrence of her accustomed desire for a more cheerful and social abode ; and the spring tide came at length, gilding the spreading water-meadows on the Severn side with the varnished flowers of the celandine, and still she sat at work in the midst of her maidens in

the hall—scarcely deigning to lift her eyes from the vast tapestry frame in which she was weaving a foot cloth for the high altar of the abbey, to be used in the more solemn festivals of the church.

But this could not last. The lively impulses of twenty-two were still too vivid in the heart of the graceful and gracious Mildred to admit of the prolongation of her unnatural estrangement from the blameless pleasures of her common course of life ; and scarcely did the berries of the mountain ash wax red in the coppice, and the hazel-nut drop unshaken from its withered husk, when the pricklers of Deerehurste-Chase were seen once more in the woodlands, heralding the palfreys of their lady and her female train ; sometimes, with hawk on hand and greyhound in leash, following the sylvan sports common in that rude century to the enjoyment of either sex ; sometimes wending their way towards the castle of the Mythe—where the good old Lord De Tracy and his ancient lady rejoiced to welcome the fair widow of their departed contemporary, to regale her with legends of the Lancastrian wars, and scandalous tales of the wanton court of Edward of York. In the stillness of the autumnal evenings, her gilded galley was seen floating along the silent tides of the Severn, or ascending the current towards its confluence with the silver Avon ; while the deer of the abbey park, startled amid the fern by the soft music of

sackbuts and dulcimers breathing from the stern of the barge where sat the merry men of Sudely, looked down, amazed by the unwonted pageant, from the acclivitous shore—whence many a gnarled oak stretched its rough arms towards the river.

It was rumoured, indeed, in the bower-chamber of the Mythe Castle, as well as in many a bay-windowed retreat of feminine gossipry in the market-place of the adjacent borough of Tewkesbury when the evening mead-cup and Saffron cakes assembled, the hooded house-dames of the wealthier burgesses after the celebration of vespers, that more than once the young Lord of Storford of the Holms had been seen loitering on his gray charger in the avenues of Deerehuste—that he had frequently joined the hunting-train of the Lady Mildred—and that on one occasion, when the awkwardness of the bargemen of the Bishop of Gloucester, combined with the force of the current had brought the galley of Deerhurst into some sort of strait and peril, the young baron rushing from a thicket overhanging the stream, had plunged into the water, *maugre* his embroidered doubtlet and cloak; and reaching the barge and seizing the helm, steered it with unexampled skill and intrepidity into a place of safety. There was not much, to be sure, to regale the palates of the censorious in these

and similar narrations; more especially as it invariably appeared that the worthy lay prior Brother Mathias, had been in every instance numbered among the party.

Nevertheless it soon came to be a matter of vulgar report that the young baron of Holms was a suitor, and a favoured suitor, to the recluse of Deerehuste Court: nor was this interesting fact a subject of scandal to any. The tomb-house was fully completed, and Sir Lionel Sudely had slumbered in peace beneath its groined arches for two long years and two short days before the rumour so much as obtained circulation; while my Lord Storford had already approved himself too staunch a knight, too honourable a gentleman, and too graceful a courtier, for much surprise to await the Lady Mildred's second choice, either in the prattling gossiphood of the shire of Gloucester, or the more solemn discussions of the antechambers of Westminster. But in their assertions that the nuptial day was fixed and the bridal bower-chamber garnished, the tattling dames both of the court and the abbey-borough were wide of the mark.

It was true that the ear of Mildred had been wondrously fascinated by the tender protestations of the young lord of the Holms; and her eye partially inclined to dwell upon the fair proportions of one whom she had originally tendered as akin to him whose memory was dearest to her

heart, but whom she now esteemed for virtues and endowments and accomplishments all his own.

It *was* true that they had sat together (accompanied at a ceremonious distance by her maiden-train) to listen to the June nightingales in the loneliness of the abbey woods; that they had glided together, under the same prudential scrutiny, over the waters of the Severn illuminated by the full-orbed splendour of the harvest-moon. It *was* true that the young and impetuous baron had breathed the ardour of his passion both in prose and verse, to the accompaniment of a tinkling gittern, assisted by the silent eloquence of a pair of arge gray sentimental eyes, which had a gift of pleading potent beyond all the orations of Demosthenes.

But it was also true that Mildred maintained a cruel reserve in her acknowledgment of a correspondent tenderness. Her dying husband's inference—"Many will seek thee, love! some for thy beauty, *some for thy wealth's sake*"—often-times appeared re-echoed in her ears; and although she was incapable of attributing such base motives to the noble Ranulph of the Holms, still the malicious whispers of the ancient baroness of the Mythe Castle who had a red-headed clod-pole of a De Tracy nephew to commend to the favour of the beautiful widow of Deerehurst, inclined

her to pause and pause ere she avowed the full measure of her regard for the youthful kinsman of her deceased lord.

It must be confessed that the Lady Mildred was by nature sufficiently tenacious of the rights and privileges of her sex ; that she was born of the number of those

Who would be woo'd, and not unsought be won ;

and that the literary capabilities bestowed upon her by her original duenna, the Lady Margaret, had been chiefly devoted since her marriage to the furtherance of her acquaintance with such bewildering romances of chivalry as tend to elevate her own sex above the fitting level, and to degrade mankind into its lowly and idolatrous servitors. And now the fantastic notions acquired by the lovely recluse from these poisoned sources of knowledge were only hastened into further mischief by the crafty intervention of the designing Lady De Tracy ; who could devise no surer method of getting rid of Lord Ranulph and his pretensions, than by persuading the fair mistress of Deerehurste that it was her bounden duty to send forth her aspiring knight on some perilous enterprise—that he might bear her colours triumphantly in the lists of foreign chivalry, and prove himself worthy of her hand by splintering a lance or pouring forth his best blood in her honour.

With some natural shuddering of reluctance, Mildred was persuaded to express a similar opinion;—and no sooner had she breathed it in the hearing of the fiery baron of the Holms than he claimed as a right her commands to that effect,—and swore that he would never again present himself at the portal of Deerehurst Court, till he could lay at her feet some honourable trophy achieved in the assertion of her supremacy.

In justice to the Lady Mildred and her apparent egotism, it should be remembered that the infatuations of Chivalry were still predominant in Europe. Bayard, the "*chevalier sans peur et sans reproche*," imparted at that epoch a species of false value to the rash quixotism of mere adventurers; while his sovereign, Charles VIII., already on the eve of his Italian expedition, calculated so largely on the influence of tourneys and armed shows on the mercurial spirit of his people, that he wisely preceded his declaration of war against Naples by the proclamation of a splendid tournament to be held in the city of Lyons, whither all the nobles of France and Brittany were now flocking to be spectators of, or participators in the encounter.

Of these, among other especial bands or companies associated for the maintenance of knightly virtues, was the celebrated order of "*La Dame Blanche à l'escu vert*,"—instituted at the commencement of the fifteenth century by the Maré-

chal de Boucicaut and twelve other chevaliers, for the protection of the fair sex—whose injnries they affected to redress, either singly or with the united force of the order, by the combat *à toute ou-trance* ; and as a preliminary to the royal passage of arms at Lyons, the knights of *La Dame Blanche* had already announced a *pas d'armes* in honour of their order, to be held in the *Foret Desvovable*, near the town of Pontoise. Thither in obedience to the wayward fancies of his liege lady, the young Lord Storford immediately resolved to repair ; and the differences recently existing between King Henry and the French court on occasion of the support yielded by Charles to the pretensions of the Flemish impostor, Perkin Warbeck, having fortunately terminated in pacific negotiations between the two countries,—within four days from the decisive interview between Ranulph and the lovely Mildred, the noble aspirant to her hand took sail from the port of Southampton for the coast of Normandy, while the gossips of the borough consoled themselves by pronouncing a severe sentence of reprobation on the arrogance and hardness of heart of the fair widow of Deere-hurste.

It was even whispered among them that the prudish Lady Sudely, contrary to all chivalrous usage, had refused to her devoted knight a bracelet of rubies which she commonly wore round her

left arm, and which on bended knee he had humbly besought of her as a love-token, or *emprise d'amour*, to affix to his hereditary crest.

Perhaps it might be with a view of escaping the uncourteous glances of these indignant dames whenever she pursued her ordinary devotions at the abbey, or perhaps that the misgivings of her bosom imparted an unnatural restlessness to her frame; but certain it is that on the very day of the baron's departure from the valley of the Severn, the widow of Sir Lionel, who for six long years had adventured no journey beyond the morning's pacing of her favourite palfrey, set off in a litter from Deerehurste Court; attended by sumpter mules, and mounted men at arms to the number of three hundred—billmen, and bowmen and esquires of the household. To the still further surprise of the good burgesses and their housedames, and the cunning Lady of the Mythe Castle, Brother Mathias himself obtained a dispensation from his superior to ride forth in her company; while the direction taken by the cortège towards the city of Oxenforde led to a surmise that their ultimate destination, for some unexplained purpose, was nothing less than the august court of King Henry!

It was in the merry month of May, just as the hawthorn bushes of the abbey park were beginning to hang out their milk-white ensigns, and the

mavis and merle to pour their gushing melodies from amid the tender green of its beechen woods, that the Lady Mildred and her train issued in goodly array from the portal of Deerehurste Court:—but the pale rose was budding in the hedgerows, and the tall fox-glove starting up with its purple bells among the red cliffs of the Mythe, when, after an absence of many weeks, the merry men of Sudeley in their doublets of tawney and silver were once more seen heralding her homeward return by way of the little village of Chilttenham.

It was observed that there was haste in their movements, and the dust of much travel on their accoutrements: but their faces wore a smile of merriment rather than the heaviness of lassitude; and even Brother Mathias, as he ambled onwards beside the closed litter without so much as pausing at the gate of the monastery, seemed touched by some inward sentiment of joyful triumph, which ever and anon expanded into a comely grin on his full-orbed visage.

Far different was the plight, and very opposite the expression of countenance, of a toil-worn knight who, towards eventide on the same day, was seen pricking furiously along the avenues of Deerehurste; attended only by two esquires armed with little show of splendour; and wearing their visors half closed, rather to disguise the

sinister expression of their countenances than from any apprehension of violence in so peaceable a district.—But for a rich carcanet of golden filigree, and the owch of tourmaline and pearls which habitually fastened the eagle's feathers into his velvet bonnet, not even the gossips of Tewkesbury would have recognised in this travel-stained knight the gay and gallant Baron Storford of the Holms.

Notwithstanding her hurried journey and recent arrival, Lady Mildred was seated demurely and in her usual guise beside her tapestry frame, when Lord Storford strode across the vast hall and stood beside her; forbearing, either in defiance or from profound pre-occupation of mind, to uncover his head in her presence. It was in that very chamber, with all its warlike garniture of hauberk and spear and shield, she had bidden him farewell; and, strange to tell although in their parting hour the brow of Mildred had worn its utmost pride of womanly dignity, and that of the young baron the tender humility of a lover, *his* was now the air of scornful self-assumption, and *hers* the tremulous anxiety bespeaking a devoted heart. And yet there was something of female archness combined with the tenderness of her smile; for at intervals she passed her lily-white hand over her brows, as if to conceal some irrepressible demonstration of mirth; or it might be that the evening sunbeams, which quivered im-

portunately on an opposite wall, dazzled her eyes as she strove to fix them upon her work.

"Thou art welcome home, Sir Ranulph," said she at length, finding that he refrained from his usual courteous greeting. "I fear me the colours of Mildred of Deerehurste have brought little credit to thy lance, since I discover no token of victory appended to thy crest or shield?"

It was more than a minute before Lord Storford could recover his breath to reply to this bold challenge; and he seemed to grind his teeth for very rage when at last he answered, "It matters little, proud lady, what honour or what dishonour I may have won in the lists of Pontoise. I seek thy dwelling but for a brief space—for a harsh and hateful purpose; I come to cast at thy feet *one* worthless trophy I have earned—to bend *one* parting look on thy false smile,—and then—and then—depart for ever from thy presence!" And as he spoke he snatched from the bosom of his vest the fatal bracelet of rubies, and threw it into the lap of the Lady Mildred!

"My own lost jewel!" she exclaimed, affecting to examine it carelessly before she clasped it on her arm; "truly I had scarcely missed the bauble: and yet it must have wandered wide, that thou shouldst find it worn in triumph in a listed tourney of France?"

"In no knightly tournament did I win yonder

loathsome evidence of thy shame," persisted the indignant baron. "Worthless as my heart's blood may appear in thine eyes, I would not peril its meanest drop in so vile a cause. It was to uphold the spotless name of the fairest lady of England that I sought the encounter of the knights of the green shield,—not to advocate the wantonness of a castaway."

"By our good Lady of Tewkesbury, these opprobrious terms must be answered for!" exclaimed the fair widow, rising from her broidery-frame, in real or assumed displeasure. "A lone woman am I, it is true,—and now, alas! championless; yet shall not my fair fame be aspersed at the captious prompting of thy petulance."

"Then let thy beardless minion look to it!" cried Lord Storford in a concentrated voice; "*thy minion*, Lady,—who, meeting me in the mere errantry of an accustomed journey ere I had ridden a day through the pastures of Normandy, challenged me in thy name with bold defiance; boasted of thy tender weakness; exhibited, like a vain braggart, yonder token of thy frailty; and laughed me to scorn that—but God forgive me that the mere recital should move me thus!" interrupted the young baron, stamping with his foot till the rowel of his golden spur rang on the pavement of the hall. "Despite his gallant train and vaunting demeanour, I tore the trophy from his crest; ay!

—and left him low in the dust on the hillside of Montivilliers.”

“Alas ! poor youth !” faltered Mildred, affecting to cover her brow with her hand.

“And now, lady, fare thee well,” resumed the indignant baron. “Farewell, Mildred !—thou, whom I would have gladly died to preserve from the merest scathe of limb, or taint of fame !—thou, over whose future life I would have watched with the patient friendship of a brother, the impassioned tenderness of a husband ;—thou, for whom I would have bled on the field, or drudged in all the sordid privations of domestic want ;—thou, for whose welfare I would have supplicated Heaven with the importunity of a bigot, even while I loved thee with—but wherefore do I speak of this ?” he exclaimed, passing the sleeve of his velvet doublet over his forehead. “The time is past when such feelings availed either to thee or me ; and henceforward, I swear by the shrine of—

“Breathe no rash oaths !” hastily interposed the lady. “Shall the boasting of a nameless stripling prevail against my own disculpation ?—Wilt thou not believe me, Ranulph ?—wilt thou not—wilt thou not—wilt thou not ?” she persisted, laying one fair hand at intervals, half sportively, half imploringly, on his shoulder ; and with the other attempting to seize his own, which involun-

tarily withdrew itself from her grasp. "Nay, then, since thou art so harsh a sceptic, behold in the rash Lady of Deerehurste the braggart youth who, in tenderness to thy life which vain ambition had incited into danger, did intercept thee in the fields of Normandy;—behold the scarf of cramoisy which in thy compassion thou didst bind around my wounded arm as I lay coward-like and writhing on the greensward;—and even if this should fail in evidence of my wayward stratagem, behold, dear Ranulph! behold the cicatrice of a certain wound pricked by a certain dagger in that fierce struggle, wherein my closely-visored helm was despoiled by thy prowess of its bracelet of rubies."

And as she faltered these last words in tearful emotion, the Lady Mildred vouchsafed to bare to the elbow an arm of ivory whiteness, on which appeared the disfigurement of a recent scar. "I had not thought," she whispered, as her lover sank low on his knees at her feet, "that I should ever experience such deadly injury at the hands of so true—so dearly loved a friend!"

How many times Lord Ranulph was permitted to press his lips to that unexampled seal of mutual affection, it might be difficult to determine. But neither the malicious lady of the Mythe, nor even the prying gossips of Tewkesbury, had a word to urge against the beautiful Mildred's con-

descension ; for Brother Mathias, in guerdon for the perils and vexations he had encountered in the recent voyage undertaken at the suggestion of her feminine caprices, insisted on uniting his brave kinsman and the fair widow of Deerehurst within four and twenty hours of their arrival at the Court.

At break of day, the bells of the abbey rang merrily for the celebration of the Lady Mildred's second nuptials ; and it was observed that while the dainty attire with which she graced the auspicious ceremony was marred in its effect by the addition of a torn and faded scarf of cramoisie and gold, a bracelet of rubies replaced the aigrette of tourmaline which previously adorned the velvet bonnet of the bridegroom.

**SIR ROGER DE COVERLEY'S
PICTURE GALLERY.**



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“ I was this morning walking in the gallery, when Sir Roger entered at the end opposite to me, and advancing towards me, said he was glad to meet me among his relations, the De Coverleys, and hoped I liked the conversation of so much good company, who were as silent as myself. I knew he alluded to the pictures ; and as he is a gentleman who does not a little value himself on his ancient descent, I expected he would give me some account of them. We were now arrived at the upper end of the gallery, when the knight faced towards one of the pictures.”

Spectator, 109.

“ A LOVELY creature,” said I, placing my hand athwart my forehead by way of sight-shade, with as much the air of a connoisseur as I could manage to assume.

“ A dear one, a prudent, and a virtuous,” rejoined the knight, turning sharply away, and betaking himself to his box, as if he had made an effort to look upon an object connected with painful recollections. Nay, if I am not mistaken, there was moisture on the lace of his sleeve as

he raised his arm to his eyes, affecting to ward off the sun-beams glaring through the windows.

Now for worlds I would not have entrapped him into the discussion of the subject; but reading curiosity in my looks, he paused when we reached the door of the gallery, and, tapping me significantly on the hand, said in a low voice, "I have her history written out in fair text hand among my family papers. My cousin Ursula was the choicest scribe in this part of the country. You will find specimens of her best Italian manner in the great family recipe book; but if you are inquisitive touching the memoirs of her sister Millicent, why 'tis heartily at your service." The word "prudent" was a stumbling-block. I was ever inclined to banish from among the cardinal virtues, the prim, self-contented, prudish-looking damsel with the looking-glass; and since even Saint Augustine pleads guilty to a similar prejudice, I,—a sinner,—need not hesitate to avow the antipathy. Nevertheless, the following sketch of family history could not but interest my feelings; and I have no scruple in pointing out the picture of the Lady Keswycke at her looking glass, as the sweetest personification of Prudence that has exemplified the duty of self-examination since the days of Penelope.

Sir Lawrence de Cressingham, of Cressingham Hall, was the friend and companion of the great

Clarendon;—sat in the Long Parliament, retired to France on the ruin of the royal cause, and died in exile. In compensation for these disasters, his son, Sir Giles, received at the Restoration offers of a pension and peerage; both of which he stoutly declined, as being connecting links with a court towards which he was any thing but favourably disposed. Retiring, therefore, to the estate or remnant of estate still pertaining to the family name, he devoted his time to its cultivation and his thoughts to the rearing of two daughters, bequeathed him by his wife, Ursula de Coverley, grand-aunt to the good knight, whom it was the ambition of his frugality to raise to the condition of co-heiresses.

Unfortunately, however, little Milicent and Ursula were not the sole objects of his solicitude. The charge of a young cousin, son to a younger brother of Sir Lawrence who had fallen on the field of Worcester leaving a young wife and posthumous child to the mercy of his then wealthy relative, was entailed upon him with the family estates; and Francis de Cressingham grew up as the sole child of the house, till, thirteen years after his melancholy birth, little Milicent made her appearance to initiate the heart of the bluff Sir Giles into the still warmer tenderness of actual paternity.

Frank, a spirited lad, with the wild blood of his race already boiling in his veins, was not jealous of the little stranger ;—nay, he would often snatch the pretty doll into his arms and cover it with kisses, till the lady mother shrieked aloud lest its delicate frame should be injured by his rough caresses. But however blustering elsewhere, Francis became a tamed lion on approaching the nursery ; and when, a few years afterwards, the Lady de Cressingham died of a slow decay, there was no one in the house whose endearments afforded consolation to her two moping motherless girls, saving those of “cousin Frank.” His visits to the Hall from college or his regiment were hailed as signals for a general holiday.

Sir Giles prepared for a carouse with the neighbouring squires ; Milicent, who at that period inclined to the coquette, began to gather the bright rings of her chesnut hair under a *fontange* of the newest fashion ; while Ursula, her younger sister, would sit for hours at her spinet, studying sonatas for his amusement. The worthy knight was scarcely prouder of his young relative than were the two girls ; and during the perils encountered by the combined fleet in which young De Cressingham was serving with honour as a volunteer, Dr. Esdras, the family chaplain, could by no means determine which of the three displayed

most fervour at morning and evening prayers in commending to heaven the destinies of those who "travel by land or by water."

Sooth to say, the reverend divine regarded much of this tenderness as a work of supererogation; for Francis de Cressingham was not only a scape-grace by nature, but a papist by profession; his mother (who survived his disastrous birth long enough to influence his religious principles) being issued of the noble house of Norfolk, and boasting the celebrated Cardinal Howard among her uncles.

Meanwhile the peace of Nimeguen restored tranquillity to Western Europe, and Captain de Cressingham to the Hall; and it was well for him that he escaped being drowned in sherries-sack by his kinsman, or smothered in kisses by the two girls, during the first twenty-four hours of his sojourn. Milicent was scarcely fourteen; yet Dr. Esdras was of opinion that the raptures of her welcome might have been moderated with advantage to all parties. He even ventured to express some such notion in the hearing of his patron and disciple Sir Giles; who swore in good round terms that he had no mind to be chaplain-ridden, and would foster no crop-eared puritan in his household till the doctor was fain to retreat into the little study that served him for dormitory and all, leaving the young people to be as loving and

frolicsome as they and the obstinate knight thought proper.

But however warm the welcome of the elder Cressingham, and however strenuous his opposition to the innovations of a meddling chaplain, there existed between himself and his kinsman a fertile and inextinguishable germ of discord. They had lived on easy terms in the relative position of benefactor and *protégé*, guardian and ward; but as man and man, the case was widely different. Frank was a blind and hot-headed royalist; while the loyalty of Sir Giles was somewhat refrigerated by the sacrifices he had been compelled to make to the improvidence and obstinacy of the House of Stuart. Frank was a courtier;—Sir Giles a clown. But above all, the knight had formed, or, as *he* said, *obtained* an opinion that, by means of certain fines and recoveries, the residue of the Cressingham estates were fully redeemed from the original deed of entail;—while Frank regarded the whole as his inalienable inheritance; and, dearly as he loved his two fair cousins, had no mind to be swaggered out of his birth-right.

A sovereign regnant is apt to look with a jealous eye upon his heir apparent, and still more upon the heir presumptive, or presumptuous, who advances unrecognised claims. The young captain had not been six weeks established at the

Hall, before theological differences ran high between himself and the pragmatical Esdras; and the party designations of Whig and Tory, then in the first blush of their virulence, were soon fiercely bandied between the two cousins. The attempt to restore episcopacy in Scotland affording an overflowing theme for those political squabbles, miscalled argument; and while the heart of the young volunteer waxed hot within him to hear himself stigmatised as a vapouring boy, the nose of Sir Giles waxed hot without him on being upbraided as a recreant from the faith of his gallant ancestors.

It soon became apparent to Milicent and Ursula, that the sooner cousin Frank returned to Whitehall the more agreeable to cousin Giles. The young man was indebted to the testamentary dispositions of his uncle, Sir Lawrence, for a sufficient provision to supply the sword of a De Cressingham with new scabbards; and he now burst forth once more upon his perilous career, and was soon heard of fighting with the great Sobieski against Tekeli and the Turks.

At this period, Milicent de Cressingham, now rapidly advancing towards womanhood, was often heard to interrupt her sister Ursula's labours in the wardrobe and still-room with expressions of joy that their cousin should be absent from England during so stormy a season of political strife;

more particularly as the zeal and domestic influence of Dr. Esdras increased in proportion as the public influence of his party declined; while the sinister aspect of their father's affairs only tended to irritate his prejudices against the ascendant faction. And yet, considering how often young Mistress de Cressingham declared herself "rejoiced" by the rambling campaigns of "poor Frank," it was surprising how much her coquetry subsided and her gaiety declined during his absence. Instead of the *fontange* with its ribands of cherry colour, Milicent's tresses were now confined under as simple a riding-hood as the starchest puritan of them all; and having laid aside the rhapsodies of Dryden and Nat Lee and the mellifluous vagaries of Waller, she was oftentimes found seated in a favourite arbour of phyllyrea, looking out on the great canal, with a volume of the Pilgrim's Progress open upon her knee.—Whither her thoughts were straying none could tell;—perhaps they were lost among the knots of a new stomacher;—perhaps at the siege of Vienna;—perhaps in the Slough of Despond!—

It is needless to relate how slowly the monotonous years passed away at Cressingham Hall; or how many hogsheads of wormwood wine, or gallons of rosemary water attested the housewifely diligence of its young mistress, when, to the amazement of their good father and the surprise of his

moderately good chaplain, the elder, the fair Milicent, was moved to decline the suit of the Lord Keswycke, a worthy gentleman from the North, with the wisdom of fifty years on his brow, and the virtue of half as many annual thousand pounds in his pocket; and who appeared, on the field moreover, in a coach and six surpassing the splendour of the Duchess of Portsmouth's!—The siege of Vienna and the lady were raised together; and in the course of the same summer, after a submissive epistle claiming pardon of Sir Giles for past offences on the score of youthful intemperance, cousin Frank returned from the Danube;—his handsome face garnished with a pair of mustachios that streamed on the troubled air like the sacred horse-tail of the prophet which he had recently assisted to capture.

The conquering hero came—and all dissensions were speedily forgotten in the enthusiasm of a stretch of heroism, such as had not graced the annals of the House of Cressingham since the Crusades. The knight felt conscious that he could do no less than take by the hand a kinsman who had ventured to take the Turk by the beard,—closed weapon to weapon with a wild Pandour,—and trampled under foot the consecrated standard of Mahommed. Again and more warmly than ever he was welcomed at the Hall;—and amid the florescent marvellousness of his recitals (at-

tested by many an ugly gash, as well as by a complexion of *terra di Sienna*, emulating the right genuine Mocha on which he had been dieting.)—Milicent's eyes were seen to recover their sparkling lustre, and her riding-hood to assume something of a more courtly shaping. The clipped arbour was now deserted, or made to shelter a pair of turtle doves in lieu of the solitary sparrow.

But lo! before cousin Frank's complexion had lost a shade of its Hungarian swarthiness under the less fervid skies of Britain, he and the old knight unluckily hit upon a matter of contestation far more stimulant to the wrath of both parties than either the test act, the orthodoxy of Dr. Sancroft, or the authenticity of the Rye-house plot. Francis de Cressingham ventured to demand the hand of his cousin Milicent in marriage;—and Sir Giles scrupled not to inform him that he was a blockhead for his pains!—

It was on a hot, sultry, cross-grained afternoon in August, the chaplain and the ladies had accepted the hint of the knight's loyal toast to retire to their devotions; and the host and the young colonel were left *tête-à-tête*. On the table between them were flagons and flasks, and tall spider-legged rummers; with a dish of mellow jarganelles, over which buzzed a swarm of summer flies and a malignant wasp or so, at which Sir Giles sat fencing with his hunting *couteau*, till his

nose grew as red as a love-apple, and his temper correspondently inflamed. After uttering divers pishes and pshaws, and other interjections to which Dr. Esdras and the recording angel might have found much to object, he looked down on his Spanish leather boots, and laid the blame on the twinges of a flying gout; and it was at this inauspicious moment, that Frank (who, having defied Kara Mustapha and all his hosts, made light of the peevish mood of a country cousin,) with most audacious self-conceit, proceeded to tender his proposals for the hand of his cousin!—The old man winced grievously; but he no longer ascribed his grimaces to any physical ailment.

“Look ye here, Colonel Francis de Cressingham,” cried he, striving to subdue his rising choler, but pushing forward the flagons of Rhenish till they chimed together like an alarum. “I esteem you well as a kinsman, as my father’s ward, as the orphan of a gallant man, and so forth; but if you fancy that a girl of mine shall ever camp in the tents of Belial;—if you suppose that Milly de Cressingham has been reared to tramp at the heels of your troop, starch your ruffles six days o’ the week, and clear accounts with her conscience by half an hour’s whisper in the ear of some con-founded jesuit of a confessor on Saturday night,—i’faith you are mistaken, colonel!—plaguily mistaken,—and no thanks to you for the blunder.

The wench will carry with her to some honest man's bosom half of my lands here pinned to her sleeve ; without needing to graft herself and them on the withered branch of her family stock."

Frank de Cressingham's reply was given in a tone worthy the fiercest pacha whose scimitar he had seen waving on the walls of Buda ! He swore that, however beneath the notice of a needy knight-baronet, he might obtain richer and nobler wives than Mistress Milicent of the Hall, any day of the year ; boasted his favour both with the king and the duke ; denounced his kinsman as obnoxious to the court ; nay, even threatened him with the growing ascendancy of popish influence. The old man's rejoinders grew louder and hotter, as he recognised the truth of Frank's allusions to his falling fortunes ; and it was well, perhaps, that the dormitory or library of the good doctor was sufficiently near at hand, and his slumbers or studies sufficiently light, to admit of his being roused by the fray. Dr. Esdras rushed into the eating hall, to separate the disputants, just as the hard argument of a heavy parcel-gilt goblet (an heir loom from their common grandsire) was flung at the head of the hero of the Danube !—

It needed not long for Colonel Frank to cause his horse to be saddled for instant departure ; yet brief as the period was between his offence

and flight, he found leisure for a moment's interview with the lovely origin of both. They met as usual, in the ever-green arbour; — where Frank, with the foam still moist on his lip and the sparkle of rage still bright in his eye, mingled his blessings on herself with curses on her father; implored,—besought,—nay, almost compelled her to fly with him; retraced their long years of tenderness; pictured their still longer years of future separation; till Milicent grew cold and pale as a marble statue in his arms, and the tears rolled down her unconscious cheeks as she listened. But Frank de Cressingham, though brave as a soldier and glowing as a lover, was not endowed with a right generous spirit of humanity; and in the improvidence of his selfishness, he now ventured to put forth an argument fatal to his cause: he told her that the ruin of her father's house was accomplished; he entreated her to fly with him from its desolation.—He did not perceive with what thrice holy sanctity he was investing the duty of a daughter!

Assuming a dignity such as had never before elevated her graceful person, Milicent instantly extricated herself from his embraces, and bade him adieu for ever. A few minutes afterwards the colonel and his horse were enveloped with clouds of dust on their road back to Whitehall; and Milly was weeping at the old man's feet.

Her father had been insulted; and the perpetrator of such an offence she no longer recognized as a lover. She implored the forgiveness of her parent,—the forgiveness of Heaven,—for that one short moment of rebellion; and poor Ursula de Cressingham had a hard task in soothing the ire of the old knight and the tears of her sister.

But the love that is grown with our growth and strengthened with our strength is not to be cast away in an hour, however grievous the backslidings of its object. The indignant daughter wavered not a moment in her determination, nor was there one tear of repentance among the floods with which she bathed the green boughs of the arbour after Cressingham's departure. But she soon grew more than ever attached to the spot;—coming hither in the first place to sigh for her lover's offences,—in the next to bewail his departure with Lord Dartmouth's expedition to Tangier;—and lastly, to commune with her own prudence touching her father's entreaties that she would once more give ear to Lord Keswycke's tender overtures.

The situation of poor old Sir Giles was now indeed, every way deplorable. His health had long been breaking. Early hardships endured during the civil wars had prematurely bowed his frame;—the consciousness of apostacy, combined with the mortification of beholding the cause he

had embraced on the death of his father gradually sink into nothingness, only augmented the mischief;—while the position of public affairs, the death of Russell and Sydney, and the flagrant malpractices of Jeffries, filled him with consternation.

Every day some harsh warning was breathed in the old man's ears; every day the denunciations of his young cousin recurred to his memory; and each retrogressive step taken by the protestant party seemed to augment the triumph of Francis and his own degradation. All these things were solemnly pointed out by old Esdras to the attention of Milicent and her sister. He assured them that their father's injudicious zeal had attracted the fatal notice of the lord chief justice; that the name of Sir Giles de Cressingham was entered in Jeffries's black list; and that nothing less than the protection of a son-in-law rich and influential as the Lord Keswycke, would secure the old knight from impeachment and the Tower. The two girls, who were no strangers to their father's imprudence of speech and action, trembled while they listened!—And on the very evening of the chaplain's argumentation, Lord Keswycke arrived anew at the Hall!—

But having formerly put to the proof the fair Milicent's inaccessibility to the ordinary temptations of her sex, he this time left the coach and

six at Keswycke Moat, and pursued his courtship in the simplest and most straight-forward manner. Perhaps his lordship was conscious of having no extrinsic advantages to match with the heroic vein; for he was a tall, stern, hard-favoured, ungainly man; wanting only a Geneva skull-cap and cloak to look the perfect puritan. His voice was tuneless—his manner harsh—his matter dry—his demeanour cold; and but that on the week succeeding his arrival, the old knight her father was subpœnaed to appear before Jeffries as witness on one of those deadly trials manufactured to fill out the purposes of his commission, it is probable that Milicent might have been unable to control her repugnance sufficiently to give him her hand.

But after due self-interrogation, terror-struck by the approaching danger, she finally consented to become Lady Keswycke in time to justify her lord in calling together his retainers, and accompanying his venerable father-in-law to the tribunal in the West:—and when soon afterwards Sir Giles was dismissed with honour from the prosecution, it was rumoured in the court and city that his preservation had cost a sum of five thousand pounds to Milicent's bridegroom. Whole years of tenderness and devotion would not have impressed the heart of his young wife so strongly as that one week of self-sacrifice and generosity!

—How could she do otherwise than venerate the hand which had preserved the life of her father!

Lord Keswycke, meanwhile, expressed a decided objection that the Cressingham family should prolong their residence at the old hall. The evil spirit of the new reign was already abroad. Faggots were heard crackling on every-side as in the bloody days of Mary, while the martyrdom of Mrs. Gaunt and the Lady Lisle, attested that they were not kindled in vain; nay it was a favourite sport with James to entertain his foreign ambassadors with vaunting narratives of what he facetiously termed the “Campaign of Jeffries!” The revocation of the edict of Nantes had cut off even the hope of a refuge in France; and Milicent, while she contemplated the perils and dangers of her infirm parent, offered up fervent thanksgivings to heaven for having afforded the means of securing him a strong-hold against his enemies, and a shelter for his old age. With her father and her sister as her inmates, her dreaded residence at Keswycke Moat lost all or half its terrors.

But though many persons averred that the stern bridegroom was mainly anxious to remove her from a spot pointed out by Esdras as replete with associations inimical to the growth of wedded love, the world was, as usual, mistaken.—However little calculated to shine at Whitehall,

or vie with the attractions of the cavalier cousin's sweeping plume and mustachios, Keswycke was a man of unswerving honour; nor would have raised to his bosom a wife whose virtue he deemed it necessary to fence round with such fierce guardianship. Milicent might have loitered out the remainder of her days in the phyllyrea bosquet, without exciting any alarm in her husband beyond that of her catching the ague from the malaria of the stagnant canal.

And well did the lovely bride repay this honest confidence in her prudence. In ceasing to be a child, Milicent had put away childish things. Her lover's egotism, her father's danger, her husband's excellence, had sobered her fancy and strengthened her character. Like "the gentle lady wedded to the Moor," she beheld her husband's image in his mind,—or rather had ceased to notice the uncomeliness of his aspect;—but, apprehending the holy value of the name of wife and reverencing the mighty importance of its duties, she felt that she had a part to play in the sight of man, and the sight of God; and that, having fallen upon a period of national trouble, it was incumbent on her to meet the tumult with redoubled firmness, even as the mountain shrubs root themselves the stronger for the tempest.

Lord Keswycke, if he did not yet touch her

heart, already commanded her respect. He was neither gracious nor graceful ; but his every word was bright with meaning—his every action with nobleness. She looked up to his intellectual superiority as to the majesty of the firmament over her head, which, transparent as it is, no eye can search or measure ; and grew more important in her own eyes, on finding herself valued and approved by a being of such eminent endowments. She knew (for Keswycke was not the man to bestow his name on one he deemed unworthy his utmost confidence), that it was to *him* the protestant party looked for furtherance and protection against the innovations of a despotic king and corrupt ministry. She knew that he afforded the connecting link between the Court of the Hague and the people of Britain ; that it needed but the uplifting of his hand for Mary of Orange to appear on her native shores, and assume a throne forfeited by her father's blind and bigoted defiance of its laws and constitution. She knew that on the acquittal of the bishops at their trial at Westminster, it was Keswycke's name that was shouted loudest by the rejoicing populace ; that it was *his* influence which upheld the opposition of the University of Oxford to the imperious mandates of the king—that the chief men of the city—the chief prelates—the chief jurists,—were in constant and confidential communica-

tion with Keswycke Moat.—Yet in spite of all this, Milicent feared nothing for his safety; for she also knew the purity of his life, the steadiness of his judgment, and the total absence of worldly and interested motives from his proceedings. She saw that his measures were taken for conscience sake; that he was above the influence of ambition, beyond the reach of venal calculations;—the diligent servant of God, the vigilant master of his own passions;—and believed him as secure as the ark of the covenant from the touch of a lawless sovereign. It was not with her liege lord as with her rash and vacillating father.

Keswycke could have said or done or thought no weak or evil thing; and Milicent was as proud of the greatness of her husband's mind as many women would have been at the mightiness of his estate and condition. Once or twice it was insinuated to her by old Sir Giles, now verging on his dotage, that Francis de Cressingham, (who was well known as an accredited emissary between the courts of James and of the Vatican, or rather as the officious agent between Father Petre, the royal confessor, and his own uncle, Cardinal Howard,) had pointed out the popular influence of Lord Keswycke as a matter of peril and terror to the weak minds of James and his queen; and that a system of espionage was accord-

ingly instituted in the environs of Keswycke Moat. Yet still Milicent feared nothing. Whenever Ursula was moved to the acknowledgment of her apprehensions, her sister did but incite her to join more fervently in prayer for their mutual consolation, and more actively in study for the engrossment of their faculties, lest she should be induced into the frailty of weak-heartedness in her lord's behalf.

"There is a mighty duty in his hand," said she, as they walked side by side along the stately terraces of the old castle. "The fate of nations is committed to his charge,—the welfare of millions,—the destinies of interminable posterity. Shall I then,—even I,—by my weak terrors molest my husband in his most reponsible career, or add one thorn to the anxieties of his arduous undertakings?—No, no! Ursula:—if I am weak, pray that I may be strengthened,—if perplexed, pray that my paths may be made straight;—but hazard not one word to me of my husband's danger, lest I grow faint in my good intent. Talk to me of other things. The earth with its flowers, which is so bright around us;—the Heavens with their stars, which are so bright above;—futuraity with its hopes, brighter, yea! a thousand-fold brighter, beyond.—Let us talk of these things, Ursula; nor linger one sentence longer amid the political dissensions of a mis-governed nation."

So stedfast was Milicent in this prudent and virtuous resolve, that throughout the perils which ensued, though her frame wasted to a shadow and her voice grew even as a whisper for very wretchedness, she breathed not a word of fear or misgiving.

From the momentous period of the landing of William, she suffered no hour of the twenty-four—no moment of any hour—to remain unoccupied; for now,—for the first time since her marriage, she was withdrawn from her husband's company. Lord Keswycke had hastened, by pre-appointment with the Lord Churchill and the Duke of Grafton to join the protestant prince at Axminster;—and even at the moment of bidding him farewell, Milicent had the noble fortitude to say "God speed him!" without embittering their parting embrace by a single tear. She looked upon him as a nuncio of Heaven, going forth to fulfil his master's work; nor was it till after his departure, after the old gates of the Moat had actually closed upon the last straggler of his train, that she fell down on the threshold in a deep swoon, struggling for hours between death and life, while the doting old knight tore his gray hair by her bedside, and Ursula sat chafing her cold hands without hope of her recovery. Her disorder arose, however, from weakness of body, not weakness of mind. Her soul was worthy of her husband and his cause; and, in the course of a day or two, she was

gravel, or ascended the mossy stone steps of the terrace—startled in their turn by the wood-pigeons they scared from their nests, Ursula vainly attempted to beguile her sister from the path leading to the phyllyrea bower. “Nay, let us not bend our steps thitherward,” faltered she at length, fancying that the spot would present painful recollections to the mind of Lady Keswycke.

“And wherefore not?”—answered Milicent, in her own sweet stedfast voice, turning upon her sister a countenance that their father’s recent death had stripped of its natural bloom. “It is my place of triumph, Ursula!—the spot where I was tempted—the spot where I was sustained against temptation. But for that green arbour and its scene of parting I had followed my youth’s vain fancy, and never been blest as the wedded wife of the noblest of mankind; had never enjoyed the triumph of being dearest of all to one whose love extends to the meanest of his fellow-creatures:—the glory of holding a part in that mind to which the nations of the earth turn for guidance and instruction:—the holy joy of knowing myself a first object in those prayers, betwixt which and Heaven no vile or worldly object interposeth!—My sister—my dear sister,—look around! look at these shapeless walls of verdure, these decaying benches, this weed-entangled ground under our feet;—and then thank Heaven

for me that they were made to bear witness to my eternal separation from one who would have had me desert my father in his falling fortunes !”

The influence of a woman thus gifted was necessarily great at the sober court of the new queen ; where, sorely against her will and solely in obedience to her husband, Lady Keswycke had undertaken the post of Lady of the Bed-chamber. Resigning the tranquil seclusion of Keswycke Moat for the stir and pageantry of Hampton Court,—and elbowing in the antechamber of the palace of St. James’s instead of presiding over the restoration of the Cressingham estates,—Milicent, over whom from her youth upward the word duty possessed a paramount authority, renounced without repining the simple habits which her country breeding rendered second nature. The buoyancy of her youthful gaiety had long been subdued into the matronly dignity of a wife ; but an innocent joyousness of spirit still sparkled in her eyes whenever Keswycke’s weight in the council, or arguments in the House, or favour with all classes of the realm, were commended in her hearing.

It was the custom of Queen Mary to sit amid the ladies of her court, engaged in needlework, or other exercises which could be made available to benevolent purposes ; and among these the Lady Keswycke was the fairest, and most graceful, and

enabled to rise and go into her oratory, and pray with all her spirit for a blessing on the absent one. —“ He saved my father ;—he is about to save my country :—strengthen him, O Lord God, with thy mighty power, and prosper his undertaking !” said Milicent ; and, in the sight of Heaven at least, she had no need to check the bitterness of her agony.

Her prayers were heard !—the hour of danger passed away !—But although Milicent knew him to be standing at the king’s right hand at Westminster, she had prudence to refrain from joining her husband in the capital, or from interceding for a short visit to the Moat, lest she should intercept however slightly, the fulfilment of his public duties. Mighty indeed had been the strife within her soul, and mighty the anguish of her heart, during the political conflict of that bloodless revolution. But still more mighty was her reward when, summoned by her lord to their new residence at court, she heard his name shouted by the grateful populace as he approached ; and, amid the tears that sprung into her eyes and which she was no longer compelled to repress, hailed for the first time the countenance she loved, brightened by the sunshine of perfect contentment !—The destinies of his country were secured, and Milicent was again in his arms !—

Amid the tumult of this unhopcd-for triumph,

Lady Keswycke and her lord were summoned to receive the old man her father's dying benediction; and it was an affecting thing to hear the aged knight, reversing the law of nature, render thanks to his child that she had solaced him, and supported him, and had been a stay to his feeble footsteps. He bequeathed his daughter Ursula to the guardianship of his high-minded son-in-law as to that of a second providence; and then like Simeon was ready to "depart in peace, now that his eyes had seen the salvation of the Lord:" leaving it to his daughters, to carry back the remains of their old father to the abode of his ancestors,—where he had hoped to return and find a tranquil home, and where it was their pious duty to lay his gray head in the grave.

Some years had now elapsed since they quitted Cressingham. The hall had grown damp and gloomy, even to the uttermost desolation; while the gardens, like every spot recommitted to the hand of nature, were only the more beautiful in proportion to their abandonment. The trimmed shrubs had shot forth into a natural shape; the flowers, unchecked and unpruned, had sprung up as in a wilderness of blossom; song-birds had built unheeded on every side; and even the wild bees now deposited their treasures in the clefts of its solitary trees. As the sisters bent their steps on the evening of their arrival across the weedy

“ Surely it is guilt enough to be accessible to the charge of so heinous an enormity,” said Lady Keswycke, shuddering with horror.

“ And has your heart no memory ?”—ejaculated Ursula : “ do you recollect nothing of your childish endearments,—your youthful friendships ! —The same blood which flows in the breast of Francis, animated our father’s ; would you see it outpoured on a scaffold ?—Would you hear the name of your forefathers profaned by the common voice as that of a traitor and malefactor ?—Your influence is great with your lord. Plead with him,—plead with him,—and save our kinsman from this disgraceful end !”

“ Leave me”—said the lady, bestowing a warm sisterly embrace upon the trembling Ursula ; “ I have need to ponder upon these things.”

Milicent was seated at her tiring mirror when her sister burst into her chamber ;—and there she still sat,—perplexed by that stir of pulse which, however great the influence of female prudence, is apt to wake anew on mention of the lover of our youth. The recollection of those early days was as a far-off vision connected with her mother’s endearments, her father’s pride in her well-doing ;—with holy memories of the dead, with holy reliance on the living. It was strange, she thought, that her sister’s partiality should have escaped her observation. Was it

vanity that had blinded her eyes?—Had her persuasion of her cousin Frank's exclusive devotion to herself rendered her insensible to the possibility of his becoming an object of attachment to another?—How came it, too, that Francis should have overlooked the lighter and brighter graces of her young sister, when connected with this flattering partiality?—Milicent was still but five-and-twenty years of age; and in spite of all her prudence, an involuntary glance bent itself on her tiring glass for a reply to the question!—

That Francis was really guilty of the offence laid to his charge, did not for a moment occupy her fears. A de Cressingham turn assassin?—No, no, Frank might have subjected himself to suspicion—but to become a deliberate murderer?—Impossible!—She knew him to be deeply pledged to the fugitive king,—the advocate and upholder of his most obnoxious measures. He had probably been induced into some outrage whereby still deadlier suspicions became attached to his designs.

What was to be done?—The court was at Hampton; and Keswycke had but an hour before departed on state business for an audience with the queen. Should she despatch an express to him, imploring his intercession?—Alas! how hard the task to commence a letter to the

most favoured. Her prudence, her dignified humility, as well as her enthusiasm in the cause sanctioned by a father and a husband, rendered her an invaluable companion to her majesty ; and when, sixteen months afterwards, the king departed on his Irish expedition, it was in the bosom of her friend (her friend—not favourite) that the daughter of James—the wife of William—deposited her two-fold sorrow. And well indeed could Milicent appreciate their influence ; and earnestly did she rejoice that the necessity of Keswycke's presence in the council prevented him from following the fortunes of his royal master. He had been appointed by the king, with seven other statesmen, to exercise a direct influence over the measures of the Queen ; and his position as the husband of her favourite friend having invested him in the royal mind with a degree of interest beyond that of the Lords Carmarthen and Nottingham, his time was soon wholly engrossed by hurried journeys between Windsor and Whitehall.

But the crisis of Milicent's destiny was now at hand.—One morning, some days after the arrival of intelligence of the battle of the Boyne, Ursula de Cressingham burst, with frantic gestures and quivering lips, into the cabinet of her sister.

“ Weep with me,” cried she ; “ weep with me : —our father's house is dishonoured ! Frank,—

our cousin Frank—our play-mate,—the hand-in-hand companion of our childhood—is a prisoner; ay, and likely to perish by an ignominious death!”

“The clemency of the king is well known,” said Milicent, coldly; “nor is it the custom of modern warfare to injure an honourable captive.”

“Alas, alas!” cried Ursula, “can I, dare I, tell you all and move you to interfere in his behalf?—Shall I avow the weakness of my heart?—Yes! I *love* him, Milly;—love him with all the fervour of womanly attachment!—While the eyes of our cousin Francis were riveted on *you*, mine saw nothing on this earth besides himself. Judge, therefore, my dearest sister, judge of my feelings on learning that a great victory has blessed the protestant host; and that the papers of the Lord Tirconnell having fallen into the hands of the victors, a horrible plot has been discovered for the assassination of the king’s majesty.—Sister,—it is rumoured that a De Cressingham is the enemy to whom was delegated the perpetration of the crime!”

“Great Heaven!” exclaimed Milicent, “I thank thee that my father did not live to see this day!”

“He is innocent!—our cousin is innocent!” cried Ursula.

lofty Keswycke with an allusion to her girlish weakness,—with the narrative of a love tale!—But there was no time for deliberation. In the midst of her perplexities, Ursula claimed admittance, and placing the Gazette in her hand pointed out to her horror-struck eyes the ancient name of her house pointed out in large capitals to the detestation of the kingdom!—Yes, all was too true. Among the papers left by King James on his precipitate flight from Dublin, was a letter (addressed to the queen from St. Germain) detailing a plan of assassination, whereby Sir Francis de Cressingham had undertaken to cut off his royal son-in-law!

“ This is no business for Keswycke’s interference,” cried Millicent, drawing on her hood. “ For twenty cousins or twenty worlds I would not peril his noble name by entanglement in so vile a thing!—But the queen loves me,—I will try my own influence over her heart. God has been merciful to her in sparing the lives of her father and husband in this unnatural conflict; let her show mercy in return.”

When the Lady Keswycke’s coach entered the quadrangle of the palace at Hampton, all appeared in confusion. Courtiers were thronging in on every side to tender loyal congratulations to her majesty, who was still occupied with her cabinet council;—but on the announcement of a lady of the bedchamber, respectful way was made; and

Milicent was able to take her seat nearest the door of the audience chamber, and await as patiently as she might the coming forth of the queen. No one approached her. The name of Cressingham seemed to have communicated some fatal infection to Lord Keswycke's wife;—and the courtiers and the ladies of the household stood in groups afar off, smiling and sneering and admiring how soon the rumour of her family's shame had brought the favourite of the queen to be a waiter in antechambers!—

But Milicent saw them not—heard them not—heeded them not!—She had drawn her hood closer over her face. Her thoughts were far away in the dimness of years; her heart was back again to the green arbour.—Again she seemed to see the fiery youth at her feet; again she seemed to shudder and recoil as he denounced her father to be a ruined man, and invited her to forsake him in his helplessness. But for that spot and for that hour she might now have been the wife of a convicted traitor and malefactor!—Had she not cause for thankfulness to the Almighty Being, by whom her determination had been inspired?—

But Milicent's prudence was about to encounter a new ordeal. On entering the presence, to which she was now hastily summoned, she discovered that she had to confront not only the searching gaze of her royal mistress, but the

wondering looks of her husband, and the somewhat supercilious smile of Bishop Burnet, who stood at the queen's right hand. Milicent's footsteps trembled for the first time on approaching an earthly throne; but after kissing the hand, she unhesitatingly kneeled down, and implored in simple terms the queen's clemency for her cousin, Sir Francis de Cressingham.

Never before had Lady Keswycke perceived the angry blood rise to the brow of her royal patroness! Mary, who resented not this bold application as a queen, but as a wife, hastily demanded, while her eyes sparkled with anger, whether the Lady Keswycke in hazarding so audacious a supplication could be aware of the crime of which that person stood accused?

Milicent clasped her hands; but said not a word in reply.

"Let, me hear no more, of it!" said her majesty, seating herself beside the council table with an air of dignity she was rarely seen to assume, "*or I may be tempted to inquire to what strange influence over the wife of Lord Keswycke, the traitor Cressingham is indebted for this eager intercession!*"

Even this harsh taunt did not divert the lady from her purpose.

"Suffer me, madam, to forestal the question," said she, striving to assume a composed de-

meanour:—and without rising from her kneeling position, and regardless of the stern gaze fixed by Keswycke and the queen upon her face, she proceeded to relate all;—her cousin's hereditary devotion to the house of Stuart,—his intemperance of spirit,—his betrothment to herself,—his interest in the heart of her only sister.

Mary bent a significant look towards Lord Keswycke, who was visibly affected by the narration.

“ Rise !” said he, raising Milicent from her knees with an air of inexpressible dignity ; “ rise, my beloved wife, nor humble yourself further for this thing. Your kinsman is beyond reach of the mercy or vengeance of kings. A price was set upon his head ; and being overtaken, Francis de Cressingham perished in the ignoble scuffle of capture. See, madam,” said he, replying with proud consciousness to the glance of the queen “ My Milicent blanches not !—Your Majesty will now graciously admit that her petition arose not from any unworthy predilection. Blessed is the husband whose heart, in spite of insinuation—in spite of prejudice—in spite of every sinister appearance—is anchored on the unswerving prudence of a virtuous wife !”

It was a proud moment for Lady Keswycke. Mary,—generously retracting her momentary mistrust,—caused the doors of the presence-

chamber to be thrown open, and walked forth into the gallery betwixt herself and her lord.

“ For once, my lord, the text is at fault ! ” — whispered the queen to Bishop Burnet, as she saw her two friends depart together in undiminished love and confidence : — “ The children of this world are not *always* wiser in their generation than the children of light ! ”

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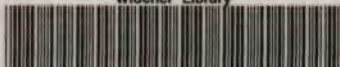
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